

LIBRARIANS

sandwell

Metropolitan Borough Council

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Applications are invited for two posts within the Schools' and Children's Library Service:

SCHOOLS' AND CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN (Ref. 374)

(S02 £9,504-£10,071 per annum)

Due to the retirement of the existing postholder at the end of July, 1983, we require a Chartered Librarian for this important third-tier post within the Public Libraries.

The main responsibilities include: all aspects of the provision of a library service to over 180 schools and educational establishments, including professional advice and assistance; organisation of training courses for librarians in schools; and the development and promotion of public library services for children throughout Sandwell (population 307,000).

The person appointed will have proven managerial experience and considerable professional commitment, plus ability to relate effectively with educationalists, teachers and librarians.

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(AP5 £7,791-£8,325 per annum)

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The successful candidate will have an enthusiastic and flexible approach and be able to communicate with teachers and children.

Closing date 17th June 1983. Requests (quoting Ref. No. and enclosing a.s.s.) for application forms should be made to the Personnel Officer, Town Hall, West Bromwich B70 8CX. Candidates of members of the Authority will be disqualified. A minimum 3-month probation period is in operation.

Edinburgh University Library VACANCIES ON LIBRARIAN GRADE 1 (Academically related)

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons to fill the academically related Librarian Grade 1 posts in the University of Edinburgh Library. The successful candidates will work in the main library or in the science libraries.

Appointment to one post may be for a limited period up to one year. Salary scale £6,312-£9,376 per annum (under review). Further particulars are available from the Secretary to the University of Edinburgh, 100 George Square, Edinburgh, or from the Librarian, 100 George Square, Edinburgh. Applications should be sent to the Librarian, 100 George Square, Edinburgh, by 10th June 1983. Please quote reference 1029.

Norfolk School of Art Library Librarian and Co-ordinator of Associated Learning Resources (£10,175-£12,816)

Applications are invited for the above new full-time post. Senior Librarian and Co-ordinator of Associated Learning Resources. SAE (B) & C. to CAO, Norwich School of Art, 25 George Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 1JH. For application form and details.

Closing date 14 days after the appearance of advertisement. L103

University of Leicester ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited from men and women graduates for the post of Assistant Librarian in the University of Leicester Library. The successful candidate should hold a good honours degree and professional qualifications. Experience with computer-based systems would be an additional recommendation.

Initial salary according to qualifications and experience on the University Staff Scale £13,500-£15,500 (under review). The post is available from 1 August 1983 or as soon as possible thereafter.

For application form and details, contact the Librarian, University of Leicester, 100-102, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH.

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ALBUMS AND ENGRAVINGS Books from the library of the late Juliet Trimble Ford Royle and other properties. Part 2 ATLASES AND MAPS including Camden's Britannia, 1695; Ogilby's Britannia, 1698; and maps by Blaeu, Cassini, Hondius, Speed, Wagenaar and others.

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Candidates must have (or expect to obtain) a recognised library qualification. A good knowledge of current bibliographic standards including AACR2, Dewey Decimal Classification (7th edition) and the UK MARC format is essential. Interest in library automation an advantage.

Salary: £7655-£9320. Starting salary according to qualifications and experience.

For further details and an application form (to be returned by 17 June 1983) write to Civil Service Commission, Alconon Link, Basingstoke, Hants. RG21 1JH, or telephone Basingstoke (0256 6851) answering service operates outside office hours. Please quote ref. 010/382.



University of Leicester LECTURESHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Applications are invited for a Lectureship in the Department of English. The successful candidate will be responsible for the teaching of English literature and for the supervision of postgraduate students. The post is available from 1 September 1983 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Initial salary will depend on qualifications and experience. For application form and details, contact the Librarian, University of Leicester, 100-102, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH.

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TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 3 JUNE 1983 • No 4,183 • 50p

AMERICA 1

The rise and fall of a man of letters – Claude Rawson on John Hawkesworth Samuel H. Beer: Britain's changing electorate



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TLS

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Living by the pen

Claude Rawson

JOHN LAWRENCE ABBOTT
John Hawkesworth: Eighteenth-Century Man of Letters
Nipp. University of Wisconsin Press, £16.90.
0 299 08610 0

John Hawkesworth is now largely forgotten. He was once a distinguished figure in literary London, the friend of Johnson, Garrick, Smart, Burney, and Benjamin Franklin. With Johnson, he was a member of that fraternity of professional authors which grew up around Edward Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine* in St John's Gate. He was a lifelong contributor and reviewer to the *Magazine* and succeeded Johnson as, in effect, its literary editor. John Lawrence Abbott exaggerates when he says in his *John Hawkesworth: Eighteenth-Century Man of Letters* that "Hawkesworth served no less than Johnson as a 'literary dictator' of his age", but there is some substance in the claim.

Hawkesworth's relations with Johnson had their ups and downs, but his career was self-consciously formed on Johnson's. *The Adventurer*, his best-known work, was a periodical essay modelled on *The Rambler* and published (with Johnson's active collaboration) as its successor. His original novel, *Almorin and Hamier*, bears a similar relation to *Rasselas*. (Asked if he had read Hawkesworth's tale, Johnson is said to have answered, "No! I like the man too well to read his book.") His prose style was modelled on the master's and was sometimes said to be indistinguishable from it. Like Johnson, he was a highly professional man of letters, who, "when he put his mind to a task... quickly effected it" and who believed with Johnson "that no man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money".

He was an all-rounder: journalist, reviewer, editor (in the periodical as well as the learned sense), biographer, translator, poet, man of the theatre, author of fictions and historian of voyages of exploration. He belonged to (and indeed helped to create) what was perhaps the first generation of professional authors who lived by the pen without apology, and who combined literary journalism with more ambitious activities in both the imaginative and the learned spheres.

They were the positive flowering of an equation which had previously seemed possible only in a negative form. A few decades earlier, in 1704, Swift had thrust Grub Street and the worlds of literature and learning into that fiercely undifferentiating melting-pot of intellectual depravity, *A Tale of a Tub*. There, a L'Estrange and a Dryden, a Danton and a Bentley, might be all one, but only to their discredit, and at some cost to factuality.

Samuel Johnson's career was to turn the tables on all that. He combined all the roles triumphantly and with no loss of self-respect. He disliked Swift, who would perhaps have returned the compliment, though they were in many ways temperamentally alike. But no *Tale of a Tub* would have been possible in 1744, still less in 1754. Careers like Johnson's and Hawkesworth's are partly the proof, and partly the cause, of that. Their circle, long before Johnson's Literary Club with its much more illustrious membership, included poets and hacks and scholars and hangers and forgers. Akin to Elizabeth Carter and the disreputable George Psalmanazar and William Lauder. Some achieved greatness, others retained respectability, the last two sank or had already sunk into disrepute. But the profession of letters which they helped to create, the acme of a proud and talented community, independent of the patronage of lords or parties, whose livelihood came largely from intellectual journalism and publishers' commissions as well as from the imaginative works for which they are now remembered, had come to stay. The upshot, contempt which Swift or Pope were able to lavish, with real moral force, on a degenerate Grub Street, was no longer possible. The hangers survived in an attenuated and increasingly anachronistic form in Fielding and as late as Byron. But for the most part these lordly accents, which once expressed the aspirations and certainties of a live and confident culture, had narrowed to mere lordliness, "the preserve" of thin-lipped and desiccated aristocrats like Chesterfield or Horace Walpole.

Unlike most of "the literary world of St John's Gate", today, Hawkesworth and Johnson neither had university degrees nor the support of university employment. Both received honorary doctorates in recognition of their literary labours. In Hawkesworth's case, the degree was a Lambeth Doctorate of Laws, conferred by the

Archbishop of Canterbury, to raise him, as the sour Sir John Hawkins put it unkindly, "above the level of vulgar literature". Such Lambeth degrees were not highly esteemed, but Hawkesworth accepted his gladly enough, and even "attempted, unsuccessfully, to use it to practice law in Doctors' Commons". Johnson seems to have felt it had made him uppity.

Hawkesworth is chiefly remembered, if at all, for his *Adventurer*, with its moral essays and oriental tales, and, among students of the eighteenth-

century novel, for his longer "oriental" fictions, *Almorin and Hamier*. Abbott plods through these, retelling the stories and pointing out that Hawkesworth meant to amuse but also to instruct. Thus *Adventurer*, No 47, is a "powerful essay" which shows "the military leader [as] kindred spirits" in juxtaposition which he evidently considers arrestingly original but which other readers might not find quite so unusual. Hawkesworth's specific examples, Bagshot and Alexander, suggest that he may have been remembering Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, and Abbott sometimes writes as though his lifetime's reading had been rigorously limited to the Hawkesworth circle. His evaluative standards appear to have been formed in the same confined space; writing of Hawkesworth's friendship and collaboration with Garrick, he speaks of a pairing of "the drama's best performer with one of its most important critics".

Hawkesworth's Garrick years brought forth bowdlerized adaptations of Dryden's *Amphitruon* and Southerne's *Oroonoko* and on entertainment of his own, *Edgar and Emmeline*. The chapter dealing with this friendship marks an uncharacteristic low in Abbott's biographical narrative. "There is considerable evidence that the two men, and their wives, were on close terms", but for all the "evidence" the account immediately becomes lifelessly speculative ("The Hawkesworths must have been frequent callers. One can imagine that Hawkesworth and his wife were moved...") or stuffily limp ("Garrick's friendship with Hawkesworth included those favors that intimates willingly do for one another").

This is the dreariest bit in the book, and I may as well get the rest of the carping done now: at some banalities of critical pronouncement ("While the periodical paper is a modest genre without the scale and grandeur of the epic..."), of ineffectual phrasing (Hawkesworth wrote in "the very midlands of neo-classicism"), at the frequent misprints (the best of which may just possibly not be one, a reference transcribed from an unpublished manuscript, to Hawkesworth's debt to his wife's "pursue [or pure?] and unlimited affections").

The book is better than this suggests, and so is the story it tells. It has spoken so far of the Hawkesworth, known to students of the periodical essay or of the world of Johnson. It charts the rise of a man of letters in the shadow of Johnson's own rise and without Johnson's genius. But the most interesting and best-told part of the book concerns not Hawkesworth's rise but his fall.

In 1773 Hawkesworth published his



John Hawkesworth, L.L.D., from an engraving by James Watson after the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

Hawkesworth's chief "scholarly" labours were his editions of Swift's works and letters, and a biography of Swift on which he was helped by Johnson and from which Johnson later drew much when he wrote his own *Life of Swift*. Abbott reports common opinion when he says the editions are textually poor, though Abbott's own account of the textual history of *Julius's Travels* is derivative and out of date. But most knowledgeable

other readers might not find quite so

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ARNOLD HIRSCH

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Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Modern History

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 East 57th Street, New York, NY 10022

Sargent was not given Introsppection; he preferred to work. With surprising loyalty to his preference, the book pays little homage to that work. In format, sometimes very cleverly, the book makes way for the plates, but his colours are poorly represented whereas the number of portraits is excessive. There are three or four plates from his portrait of Agnew (1892/3), each managimg differ from one another with the darkest and worst on the cover. Sargent's pictures, even in reproduction, tell a coded story and cataloguers have to face entries of nearly 3,000 paintings. This is an amount of work might not compare with a biography, but it is an overwhelming proof of what Sargent thought was the point of his painting. This book is only a partial indication of that fact, and as such is only of partial value.

Rhetorical diseases

F. L. Wallis

DORIS LESSING

The Sentimental Agents in the Volcanic Empire

179pp. Corgi, £7.95.
0 224 02130 3

This fifth volume inaugurates the fourth year of Doris Lessing's continuing home-study course on the *Archives of Canopus* in Argos. Students new and old will be aware that of all the empires ever to spread their stony nets across the seas of space and time, Canopus is the most benevolent and venerable. We have this on the highest authority, the authority of Canopus itself. Of the other dominions mentioned on this course, Sirius is unprincipled and exploitative, Puttara is degenerate and perverse, while Volcan, a rudimentary affair of three to five planets, is clearly all but negligible, an "Empire" to be contained within inverted commas. Thus Klorathy, the Canopian agent whose reports Lessing here presents, reminds us that Volcan, its concerns and claims, are questionable. As natives of Shikasta, the planet where everything has gone wrong, the nearest Canopus has ever come to a failure, we need instructions like this. We have even forgotten that Shikasta is a colony, eternally obliged to bountiful Canopus: we know it only as "Earth". We are here to be re-educated; it is all for our own good.

Klorathy the imperial archivist may indeed be impeccable. This much we can put down to characterization, and to the internal logic of Lessing's creation. But Lessing is Klorathy, as the first paragraph of this book implies. Klorathy requested a transfer from the unbearable Shikasta, only to be sent out to Volcan, not even a possession of Canopus, but "a planet whose dominant feature is the same as Shikasta's: self-destructive dementia." Just as Lessing's mental fugitives from Sirius, Africa to communism, found herself in another patriarchal state, as she explained in *The Golden Notebook*. A subversive impulse drove her, once she had been elected to a secure seat in the parliament of English Literature, to subscribe to the radical manifesto of science fiction. Unwillingly she then sought out the most authoritative of SF's traditional modes, the chronicle of

gaetic empire. She may still be capable of appreciating the irony of her choice; if so she no longer shows it. Formerly Lessing offered keen appraisals of the insidious seductions of orthodoxy; now she has relaxed, and is merely orthodox. To be orthodox is to be incapable of irony, it seems.

Irony Lessing would now identify as a figure of Rhetoric, and dismiss. The "Sentimental Agents" are the people Klorathy is on Volcan to combat, and they all depend on Rhetoric, are addicted to it, suffer from it like a virus. William Burroughs, possessed of similar socio-linguistic insights, infiltrated the Empire of Signs armed with several explosive devices. Lessing, as Klorathy, sets up "Hospitals for Rhetorical Diseases" where ideologues can be cured, taught to speak properly. Woeful are the effects of "the lying Rhetoric of invaders" from other empires, the Sirians for example.

Miserable exploited populations, refused any means of protesting, have to listen to the whims of self-proclaimed Sirians and their local captive minds. Anyone who tries to use language accurately to describe what is happening vanishes into torture rooms and prisons or, distorted as mad, into mental hospitals.

It no longer occurs to Lessing that the same charge can, must, be brought against Klorathy himself, buzzing from planet to planet confining sentimental agents to his own secret "hospitals" the minute they start speaking of Freedom, History and Destiny, of throwing off chains. Only Klorathy may use a phrase like "miserable exploited populations" and get away with it.

Lessing's automatic identification with those persecuted for using language "accurately" is a reflex which is saddest in such a writer, because it is no longer appropriate, no longer true. There is no such thing as "accurate" language; only greater and lesser degrees of artifice. Science fiction, with its multiplying stock of imaginary and artificial things, is a cornucopia of devices for the fabulist. Unfortunately its imperial theme also attracts authors who have ceased to examine myths and are looking for somewhere to establish and enforce them, somewhere unlike the recalcitrant real world.

Tragedy on the A4

Galen Strawson

DEBORAH MOGOACH

Porky

236pp. Cape, £7.95.
0 224 02948 7

Porky is a slight and intentionally graceless work in three parts (the first two are particularly abrasive; the reader is hectored, you-ed, rhetorically questioned, mock-commanded). But it manages to deal convincingly with the old tragic theme of incest none the less. And, in so doing, it does provide one more refutation of that theory of tragedy, sometimes attributed to Aristotle, according to which the tragic hero must be admirable and impressive – or at least a person of some consequence. Tragedy can flourish in what is small and sorry, insignificant and squalid; indeed it may well achieve its highest forms in mean, undramatic settings. Nor is Aristotle (or "Aristotle") right to suggest that tragedy requires some error of judgment on the part of the hero or heroine. Mere accident, or unavoidable lack of information, can suffice. Seduction by a parent does the trick just as well.

Heather – Porky because of her pale eyes, and because her father keeps a few pigs – grows up on a tatty bungalow on the A4, opposite the Heathrow perimeter fence, not far from the main runway. She watches the travestied countryside around her house disappear patchily under stop-over hotels and petrol stations. Her father wheels and deals, feebly; her mother works as a cleaner in Terminal Two. A

pillow isn't enough to drown their squabbles; Heather learns to fold her ears back on themselves first, and hum. Sometimes her mother works out on them for a couple of days.

When Heather is ten, her mother spends a month in hospital before giving birth to a son. Later she leaves for a longer period, and Heather is forced into responsibility for the baby. During these absences incest escalates, from rough "I didn't mean to" kisses to coition when she is twelve. Her father is clumsy, remorseful, guilty. Desperate to hold things together, anxious to please, Heather is (as referred to in the title) a girl most vulnerable to incestuous advances.

Growing up, she leaves school early, goes on the pill, gets a job packing airline lunches, learns French from cassettes and succeeds in becoming an air hostess, slipping the while into small-scale promiscuity – promiscuity which is an unconscious bid for normality, a hopeless attempt to efface the fatal sexual imprint of her father in her body.

The sense of guilt grows slowly in the girl. The best feature of this novel is Deborah Mogoach's success in conveying the complexity of the effects of gradually consummated incest, the scope of childish incomprehension, the patchy character of Heather's stop-start evolution into fully-fledged trauma which leaves her wholly incapable of believing that anyone could ever really love her. There is nothing dramatic in this incest, no catastrophic forcing. The father is always gentle with his daughter. When he subsides from orgasm to sob, she is too terrified by the strangeness of her father in this state, too anxious for him

to become recognizable again, to be able to fear or understand him. The sense of wrong is undercut by the sense of sexual matters. She loves her father and desires contact with him. The things are not simply distorted, instead they are steadily undermined by the malignant growth of incest.

But the growth of incest is slow, by a compelled complicity. She is forced into collusion with her father both by her continuing love for him, her sense of the need to look after him in her mother's absence, and, when her mother returns, by her pitiable desire to maintain the forms of normality in a dangerously fractious home: as achieves a false stability made precarious, that are preserved in equilibrium partly by the fact that she cannot afford to acknowledge incest. Disgust at her father and the appalling language of his passion – permeating his penis, he emits a vile mixture of inept childish endearments and wheedling insinuations – and her developing "bulb" – come slowly and piecemeal: it is a kind of inappropriate at the test-table the day; her father is a kind man. What she does?

All this is well conveyed. Tragedy is made plain. It is in the effect of the incest – Heather's complete inability to accept love, to return it. But the intentionally language of the book – a patchy, debased diction, delivered with the schoolgirl verve at a chip, a simple, laconic tilt – is very wearing, and it contributes nothing essential to establish mood and character. One regrets the lack of quieter, more measured construction, for a treatment of incest is subtle and true.

Chipping at the baobab

Roger Owen

DAVID CAUTE

The K-Factor

216pp. Michael Joseph, £8.95.
0 7181 2260 7

The K-Factor is set in Zimbabwe during the violent period between the colonial settlement and the election of Robert Mugabe. Its title (K is for Kaffir) is an ironic application of a phrase used by some White Rhodesians, a species for which the author has little sympathy. He shakes his head over their ignorance of the nineteenth century Russian novel in the very first paragraph. David Caute strikes at once that characteristic note of sardonic superiority present in *Under the Skin* – the *Death of White Rhodesia*, his blockbuster of impressionistic reportage which was published earlier this year. *The K-Factor* is to fact a re-working of much of the material of that book.

The theme of both books is the same, namely "the myths, legends, rationalizations and fantasies of false consciousness". Inevitably the rationalizations and fantasies with which the Whites sustain their view of the world present the larger target, and it is against these that the full force of the author's odium is directed.

The novel tells an action-packed and violent tale with a dazzling display of know-how. Readers will learn the provenance and fire-power of the AK47 rifle; the slang word for a lion lager; the brand names of local cigarettes; the address of Salisbury's best massage parlour, and so on; Caute makes sure that we accept his bona fides. The burden of this information-giving is carried by dialogue. This has the effect of undermining the verisimilitude. It seeks to establish, because people keep telling each other things which in reality they wouldn't need to. We are also exposed to some simplified potted history. "Their ancestors had occupied the terrain for centuries", says Caute of the Africans (which is not true as far as the Ndebele are concerned). There is a good deal of highly schematic political debate.

The plot is complicated. Sonia, a rich girl who, during whisky behind the

security fence of her farm. Beyond the fence terrorists and radicalized Jesuits go about their business. Helicopters whirl overhead. Bizarrely, in these circumstances, Sonia discusses feminism with her lesbian lover from London and attempts to seduce her other house-guest, who, even more bizarrely, is a young, black, sophisticated Marxist (he uses words like "re-ify") and a local boy at that. Bewilderingly, even for one whose behaviour is so deviant, Sonia persists in bandying around words like "munt" and "kaffir" in the political colloquies which ensue. These usages he in turn accepts, with inexplicable sang froid. Perhaps these exchanges are supposed to indicate some extraordinary degree of liberation and unconventionality on the part of both of them. But the meaning is murky, and the situation improbable.

The story turns on the abduction of Sonia's baby by the blacks. It seems, however, that this might be a fantasy object, the function of which is to legitimize White indignation, and therefore a product of "false

consciousness". We have to remind ourselves that white and black babies were really murdered, and that there were grounds for indignation on both sides. There is also a rape scene – not almost mooted in a novel set in Africa – in which Sonia's "false consciousness" might again be at work. The black guerrilla leader has a "enormous penis". Is it a real one? Is it enormously imagined? The combination of this kind of puzzle with strong surface naturalism poses some difficulties.

But it is the partiality of the author's sympathies which damages the book most seriously. A savage black policeman who arrests a terrified white "smiles like Jesus on a black nail" – this is the sardonic note reserved for whites. "Another swing of the axe at that great baobab tree Zimbabwe", comments the author. That is an exaggerated and sentimental view reserved for black nationalism. The very word "Zimbabwe", in its present usage, is itself a piece of myth-making. And certainly the polity it refers to evokes no images of gnarled solidity.

The Journey

The sun had not gone down. The new moon

Rose alongside us, set out as we did:

Grateful for this bright companionship

We watched the blade grow sharp against the night

And disappear each time we dipped:

A silver illumination at the crest

Awaited us, a swift interrogation

Showed us the shapes we drove towards

And lost them to the intervening folds

As our way descended. It was now

The travelling crescent suddenly began

To leap from side to side, surprising us

At every fresh appearance, unpredictably

Caught among the sticks of some right-hand tree

Or sailing left over roof and ridge

To mock us. I know the explanation

But explanations are less compelling than

Then various returns and the expectancy that can

Never quite foresee the way

The looked-for will look back at us

Across the darkness of distances that keep on

Lapsing and renewing themselves under a leaping moon.

Charles Tomlinson

Politics without precedent

Samuel H. Beer

WAYLAND KENNET (Editor)

The Rebirth of Britain

215pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £12 (paperback, £5.95).
0 297 78177 4

RALF DAHRENDORF

On Britain

200pp. British Broadcasting Corporation, £6.95 (paperback, £2.95).
0 563 20037 5

HUGH STEPHENSON

Claret and Chips: The Rise of the SDP

210pp. Michael Joseph, £8.95 (paperback, £5.95).
0 7181 2189 9

IAN GILMOUR

Britain Can Work

264pp. Oxford: Martin Robertson, £8.95.
0 85520 571 7

The run-up to a general election is hardly the time for deep thinking about British politics. It is not infrequently the occasion to voice grievances. So this foreign observer may appropriately preface his comment on these books with a complaint, a nostalgic complaint.

The young cannot imagine what a comfort it was to study British politics thirty years ago. Britain then was the model of stable democracy in the West whose politics allowed nothing to happen for the first time and relieved the lecturer of the need constantly to refresh his notes with new research in order not to be caught out by events. Today, however, "volatility" reigns in a process that continually produces outcomes that are "unprecedented".

Consider, the fluidity, not to say frivolity, of public opinion over the past four years. In 1979 Mrs Thatcher

came out on top with forty-four per cent of the vote. In little more than a month Labour had moved back into the lead in the polls and by November 1980 was winning fifty per cent of the public's support. A year later, a new force, the Liberals/Social Democratic Alliance, had captured almost as large a portion of the prospective vote – forty-four per cent – leaving the Conservatives with only twenty-seven per cent, a new low for them. Then, after the Falklands victory of June 1982, Mrs Thatcher led her party to a new high of fifty-two per cent, "a lead", commented *The Economist*, "unprecedented for any modern government three years into its period of office". I ask: what has happened to John Bull, that figure of phlegm and moderation, who used to dominate the political scene, and reassure the impatient lecturer?

For students of politics the question of the hour is whether the old political mould has been broken. Peter Jenkins sketches what he calls "the crumbling of the old order" in his contribution to the Social Democratic Symposium, *The Rebirth of Britain*. He starts from "the classic age of two party government", 1945-65. Those were the days when Britain, like other Western countries, discovered "the end of ideology". Politics was not adversary, but consensual, as the two big parties converged in what they proposed to do and even more in what they actually did when in power. In the mid-1960s I was thought a bit eccentric for saying that in spite of this convergence certain fundamental differences still divided them. A commoner view was, in the late R. T. Mackenzie's words, that "two monolithic structures now face each other and conduct furious arguments about the comparatively minor issues that separate them". As early as 1951 Drew Middleton, freshly arrived in London for the *New York Times*, had reported the general election campaign of that year as "the lull before the lull". This is hardly the way R. W. Apple, Jr sees it for

Americans today. Adversary politics has reached a new peak.

The similarity of views was matched by the stilted support. Squeezing the Liberals towards what seemed certain extinction, the big parties divided the voters into two evenly matched forces whose strength varied little over the years. Looking at the monthly Gallup figures from their start in 1947 to the early 1960s, one sees the party lead for considerable stretches amounting to no more than the statistical margin of error. In the mid-1960s this pattern changed abruptly; the lead between the parties widened, yet also began to shift back and forth more rapidly. The growing propensity for voters to change their minds was also expressed in the surges of strength for the Liberals, on their own in the 1960s and 70s and in recent years as partners in the Alliance. As this vote rose, the share of the total won by the two big parties fell, according to one opinion survey, sinking to fifty-nine per cent in 1981. Recently Robert Wybrow of Gallup announced that "half the country are now floating voters".

Some see in these changes the promise of "realignment", the implication being that the two-party system will recover its strength as new combatants come to occupy the old shell. That is more than the data suggest. A major ground for "the crumbling" has been the decline of the class-party nexus, abundantly reported and exhaustively analysed since the 1960s. Many will be pleased to see this move away from an electorate "as polarized by class as Britain's has been during the post-war years. These old social divisions, however, were also class bonds and their weakening does not mean that new "ligatures" to use a striking expression of Ralf Dahrendorf's, are emerging to take their place as grounds for party cohesion. On the contrary, the decomposition of class is simply one aspect of that loss of social cohesion which Dahrendorf in *On Britain* sees as

Britain's most serious problem. He tries to suggest remedies, but his portrait of the *anomie* that has supervened upon the traditional civilities of British life is more persuasive than his hopes for the future. Against that background, chances for escape from "ideological order" seem slim.

Two striking by-products of this "crumbling of the old order" are the Social Democratic party and Mrs Thatcher. Both defy precedent and the ups and downs of their fortunes caricature volatility.

New parties do arise in Britain, sometimes claiming to be agents of innovation, the Labour Party being the main example in this century. Is this the precedent for the Social Democrats? It is a curious party of innovation, however, that stands for so much that is continuous with the past. When the SDP was launched, *The Times* remarked that at a time when the two main parties had "broken away in different directions from the post-war consensus", this "new beginning" was "seeking essentially to bring that consensus up to date".

If it is continuity for which this splinter from a left-dominated Labour party stands, one should look in a different direction for historical parallels. In British history splits resulting from the challenge of a heightened radicalism have from time to time brought the Tories an accession of strength. Whigs reacting against the ideas of the French Revolution; the business interests that moved out of the Liberal Party as it entered its Radical phase; the drift of other Liberals to the right as the Labour Party gained strength. With regard to many current issues the Social Democrats have much in common with present-day Conservatives: trade union reform; a freer and wider private sector; a more restrictive fiscal and monetary policy. They do not mean to join up with the Conservatives. Neither does the Liberal

Unionists who parted from Gladstone in 1885 and in time contributed half of the new name of the Conservative and Unionist Party. Thinking improbable thoughts, one conjures up the Conservative and Alliance Party of the 1990s.

It would seem, however, that we must leave the Social Democrats where they have chosen to be, viz. in a partnership representing the advanced liberalism which furnished the main ideas, as exemplified by Beveridge and Keynes, for the welfare state not only in Britain, but also in the United States. Indeed, the left-of-centre American who is a bit uncomfortable with proletarian socialism or aristocratic Toryism may well feel most at home in this company. It was on their heritage that Franklin Roosevelt drew when fifty years ago he popularized the term "liberal", which still characterizes the main thrust of the Democratic Party.

Whether or not the past political success of American liberalism is my precedent, the Alliance has raised a standard to and away from which the "designated" flood in numbers which at one moment promise the fullness of power, only shortly afterwards to threaten extinction. Hugh Stephenson in *Claret and Chips: The Rise of the SDP* has described the series of near disasters followed by improbable successes by which the SDP has created a national organization, reached agreement with the Liberals, selected their leaders and by now chosen candidates in over 300 constituencies. Their activists embrace a high level of competence, being drawn very largely, as he notes, from the new professional classes. Can they establish enduring links with enough of the "designated" to bring into existence what Roy Jenkins calls "a full three party system"? That would be the final crunch that would break the mould of the old order. The present election could answer the question.

To Sir Ian Gilmour, Mrs Thatcher is

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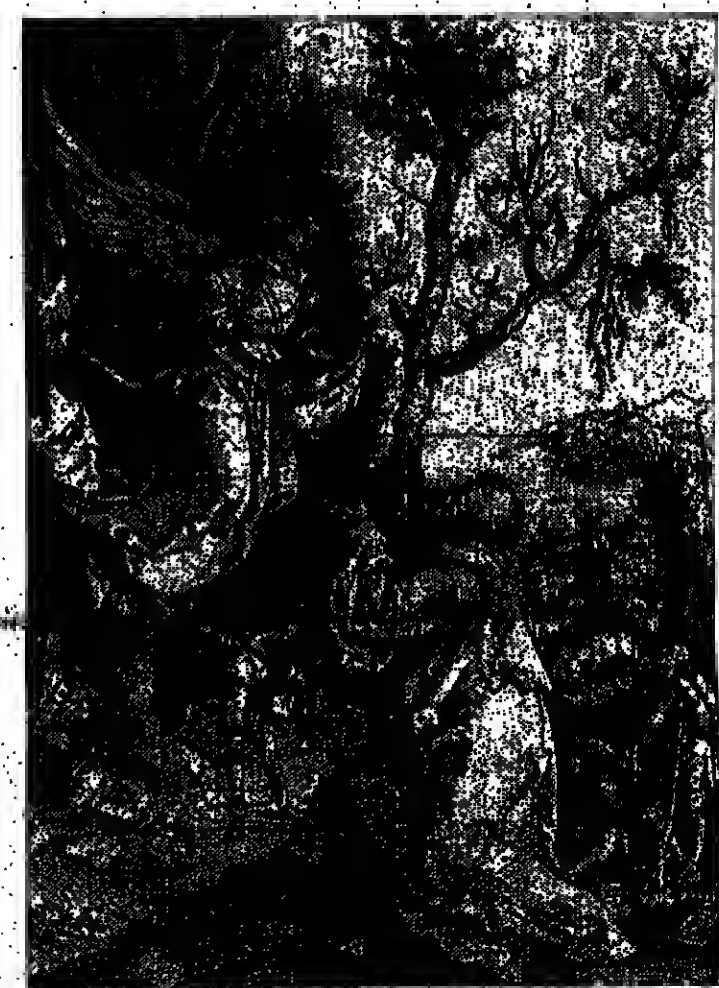
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Modest reforms

W. H. Walsh

PATRICK RILEY

Kant's Political Philosophy
213pp. New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield (distributed in the UK by TABS). \$28.95.
0 8476 6763 4

HANNAH ARENDT

Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy: Edited and with an interpretive essay by Ronald Beiner
174pp. Brighton: Harvester. £16.95.
0 7108 0449 0

Kant's political philosophy is not usually accounted the most profound or exciting part of his system. He felt strongly on a number of political questions, in particular the need for what he called a "republican" constitution, one in which citizens would be consulted or at least considered by rulers and not simply used for forwarding their ends; he was also (and the two issues were closely connected in his mind) an unyielding opponent of war and advocate of a rudimentary league of nations. He not only welcomed the French Revolution, but said of it that it "finds in the hearts of all spectators . . . a wishful participation that borders closely on enthusiasm". Yet he could not bring himself to allow to citizens, even in the most tyrannical conditions, the right to rebel, while his prescriptions for constitutional reform, in particular about what groups should have the franchise, were extremely modest. Kant's detailed knowledge and understanding of political realities, when compared with those of, say, Hegel, were slight. Like other men of the Enlightenment he saw politics from a distance. And this was not surprising, given his status as a professor in a minor university in a remote part of a despotic state.

Patrick Riley does not accept the

conventional verdict: for him Kant is "a political philosopher of the very first rank", "the most important and attractive of political philosophers". Riley does not deny that Kant's political thought had its weaknesses; he just believes that Kant's chief proposal, to institute a politics which is "republican" and "peaceful", is more suited than that of any other political theorist to the needs of the modern world, especially if we set aside the "apocalyptic" and the "over-sanguine". Riley explores Kant's republicanism and his views about peace in two of the central chapters of his book. But his main interest lies not so much in the details of Kant's political philosophy as in the place political philosophy has in the Kantian system. Riley wants to dispute the verdict that it belongs only on the periphery as a kind of optional extra or dispensable afterthought. Rather, he says, it has a vital part in bridging the gap between nature and freedom: an achievement with which Kant was increasingly preoccupied as time went on.

The case for this conclusion is made through a close examination of certain sections of the *Critique of Judgment*, a work Riley takes to be of crucial importance for Kant's philosophy as a whole. There Kant discourses, among many other things, on "the ultimate end of nature", which turns out to be the attainment by human beings of a state of "culture". Culture in this connection is a condition in which men are not merely masters of the sciences and practitioners or spectators of the arts, but in which, more generally, they have a capacity for "the furthering of ends of all kinds". The capacity to set themselves a wide variety of ends does not in itself elevate men above nature; it does, however, loosen nature's bonds and so prepares the way for self-determination. In this respect it compares with another condition which is alleged by Kant to come about naturally, the attainment of a civil constitution, which subjects men's selfish activities to the rule of law. Here

we have the realization of morally desirable ends through the operation of motives which have nothing to do with morality, in both cases nature as it were points beyond itself and in a sense prefigures the sphere of freedom: the absolute opposition between the two is mediated—or so we are led to believe.

It is certainly true that the *Critique of Judgment* contains ideas of interest and importance about human life; the passage in the part on aesthetics about the social aspects of art is one example, that to which Riley calls attention another. But Riley does not restrict himself to the exegesis of such passages. His claim is that the third *Critique* really does the trick Kant promised to perform when he wrote it: it shows the critical philosophy to be a genuine unity of a teleological kind. Or rather, it suggests that it may be properly taken in that way, the notion of something super-sensible which underlies and unifies the spheres of nature and freedom being a necessary idea of reason. Kant on this account takes a long step in the direction of Hegelianism, but finally draws back from Hegelian conclusions ("Spirit" remains for Kant an anonymous regulative idea.) If it is a correct account, Riley's work has an interest altogether broader than its title suggests.

However, there are certain caveats to enter. One concerns just what the unitary reading can be taken to have achieved. Riley himself notes that some recent commentators on the *Critique of Judgment*, among them Guyer and McFarland, have treated these particular claims of Kant's with scepticism, if not disdain. He tries to answer their criticisms, but does not

succeed in offering a convincing positive account of his own. Kant can hold that nature and freedom may form a unity; he can perhaps advance as far as saying that we must think that they form a unity. But can he offer any explanation of how the unity is achieved? The answer is of course that the doctrines of the first *Critique* preclude any such explanation. And in its absence a "teleological" reading of the Kantian philosophy, which claims to bring together its theories of nature, art, politics, history and morals, must remain at best interesting; it cannot really convince.

A second caveat touches Riley's particular interests. As shown, he argues that Kant's political philosophy is an integral part of the critical system. Even if that were true it would not of course demonstrate that the details of that philosophy are important; it would certainly not support the large claims Riley makes on its behalf. But in any case it seems doubtful whether Kant does assign much of a mediating role to his philosophy of politics proper: it is his philosophy of history which plays that part. Admittedly, Kant's philosophy of history has a strong political slant to it; it traces the actual and foreseeable fortunes of the human species through what are in effect two main political stages. Interesting as this may be, however, it hardly constitutes a comprehensive theory of politics.

Riley's book is careful and scholarly and touches on many topics, including fundamental points in Kant's ethics and the value of other books on its general subject. It brings together a lot of information and calls attention to neglected material. But it seems in the end to lack both shape and sustained

drive: the positions argued for are not really made out; in some cases they are not really discussed, it can be recommended as readable, but not much more.

Among the commentators on Kant's political philosophy of whom Riley most approves was the late Hannah Arendt. Her lectures on the subject at the New School for Social Research, given in 1970-71, have now been edited, with an "interpretive" essay, by Ronald Beiner of the University of Southampton. They do not bear out Riley's estimate of Kant on politics, since they begin with the road declaration that Kant's actual political writings "cannot compare in quality and depth" with his other works. But rather a political philosophy Kant might have worked out, had he not first come across the ideas when he was old and feeble, a philosophy which might have taken its start from section 4 of the *Critique of Judgment* and would have presented politics, as Kant presented art, not from the point of view of participants but from that of the calm and judicious spectator. What further content that philosophy might have had Arendt does not succeed in communicating, despite some promising forays and acute individual remarks. The main interest of her book, as her editor makes plain in his admirable commentary, is more in her own work than in Kant's: it is valuable principally for the light it throws on the missing volume of a large-scale work she did not live to complete. Kant was always an important influence on her thought. But the light she here throws back on his unwritten political theory is unfortunately disappointingly dim.

MARK TWAIN

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JACK LONDON

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Library of America. \$25 each.

CHARLES N. WATSON

The Novels of Jack London:
A Reappraisal
304pp. University of Wisconsin Press.
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The Library of America is launched with considerable fanfare a year ago. Echoes of the event reached Europe, but maybe the republication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Leaves of Grass* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, among other titles, did not seem to merit close attention. The revival of classics beyond the protection of copyright, after all, has been a recurrent feature of a publishing scene anxious to invest in the literary equivalent of gilts. Perhaps this was merely another paperback venture pretentiously paraded in hard covers.

Nothing could have been more mistaken. The roots of the Library of America go back at least twenty years and its launching in the spring of 1982 was the triumph of an intellectual and commercial alliance in the face of general apathy and ingrained academic mistrust. The force of the whole enterprise was that Johnsonian and universalist, Edmund Wilson, who for a working lifetime had earnestly steered clear of the universities. If the Library of America is in some ways his memorial, it is also the universities' belated and wholehearted tribute to Edmund Wilson.

Wilson had never been preoccupied with theoretical approaches to criticism. The mark of his style, rather, had been its gusto and width. His task, as he saw it, was to explain the world to America and America to itself. The task was possible, he insisted, because the American and the European intellect spoke a common language. It was an essential task because rest on two debatable conjectures about human beings in society, which lead to the conclusion of individualism, protection of individual liberty should be paramount. Wilson's conjectures are that "mature" human beings in "secure" societies would be prepared to sacrifice their autonomy for other benefits, and that without a strong right to liberty people cannot become or remain autonomous agents.

It is absurd that our most read and studied writers should not be available in their entirety, in any convenient form. The kind of thing I should like to see would follow the example of the *Editions de la Pléiade*, which have included so many of the French classics, ancient and modern, in beautifully produced and admirably printed thin-paper volumes, ranging from 800 to 1500 pages.

He could not have enlisted a better man. Epstein secured foundation backing for the proposed series by approving Lionel Trilling pronounced the lack of adequate editions of the great American writers "a national disgrace". H. A. Auden added that even in Russia such a situation "would be regarded as a national disgrace". John F. Kennedy was induced to give his presidential blessing, though using a oddly negative phrase, he called the absence of "comprehensive editions" "a sad lack of our national culture".

St. W. Lewis (in a fine article published last year in *The New Yorker*) rightly bridled at the phrase: "The Library of America is a phraseology which will face a lean time."

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Like *Editions de la Pléiade*, the Library of America is launched as an infinite enterprise. Here is the American version of a literary Eden which will constantly expand, as it reaches back into the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as forward into the twentieth, while maintaining every volume permanently in print. Being an American Library, moreover, it will not split

near, is bound to make contemporary authors even jumpier than they are already. That decoy, the Great American Novel, may now be replaced by anxiety over entry into this posthumous pantheon, this *Académie Américaine*. Will Mailer make it? Will Salinger? William Carlos Williams? Hart Crane? If so, will it be in a hold-all or second-class compartment reserved for minor nobles or in glorious first-class isolation which (as of 1983) is likely to be the distinction of Faulkner, T. S. Eliot, Stevens, Frost and Pound? What seems a noble consensus today may yet become a scene of embittered, sectional politics.

Still, for the present, all is *luxu, calve et voluptate*. Though containing an average of 1300 pages, these are not chunky blocks but elegant, friendly volumes (about five inches by eight) which open readily and actually lie flat, as Edmund Wilson had insisted. Bruce Campbell is their designer. They are printed on acid-free, bible-thin paper. They look permanent and (according to the Library's release) "will last for generations and withstand the wear of frequent use". Possibly shorter-lived may be the scholarship. Text apart, the

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Expedient principles

Richard Lindley

JOHN GRAY

Mill on Liberty: A Defence
143pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
\$8.95.
0 7100 9270 9

John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* is the classic statement of liberal principles for the protection of individual freedom against the encroachment of the state. Mill, however, is even more famous as a leading nineteenth-century utilitarian. This has appeared paradoxical, for according to the prevailing orthodox utilitarianism is regarded as inconsistent with moral absolutism in general, and with Mill's Principle of Liberty in particular. John Gray has written an important book which both develops recent criticisms of the received view, and explains how Mill, in *On Liberty*, offered a powerful utilitarian defence of strong rights to individual freedom.

Were Mill's Principle of Liberty simply a "rule of thumb"—a principle to the effect that, other things being equal, states should not interfere with the liberty of their members in the self-regarding domain, it would be easy to reconcile with utilitarianism. For as a rule, such a restriction on states would probably maximize utility. However, on any plausible account of people in society, it is not true that the Principle of Liberty would sometimes lead to a significant loss of utility; and the Principle is intended to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control.

Dr Gray's defence begins with a re-examination of Mill's utilitarianism. Both the writings on the "Art of Life" and *A System of Logic*, and *Utilitarianism* itself, reveal that Mill subscribed to a form of indirect utilitarianism. His moral philosophy is grounded on his theory of life, according to which "pleasure and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends". Gray remarks that this is an axiological principle which governs things other than human practices and actions, and which cannot in itself enjoin any particular line of conduct.

This Principle of Utility should be distinguished from what Gray calls the Principle of Expediency, which, though attributable to Mill, was never named by him as such. It states that an

act is expedient if it brings about a net gain in utility, and maximally expedient if no available alternative could produce more utility. Although this latter principle does not obviously follow from the Principle of Utility, Mill undoubtedly subscribed to both. Gray's task is, then, to show that Mill is right to hold that a morality requiring special respect for liberty will be maximally productive of happiness. For, added together, the two principles yield the conclusion that acceptable practical principles are just those the acceptance of which will maximize utility.

Gray argues convincingly that Mill was neither an act nor a rule utilitarian, but rather that he rejected both in favour of an indirect utilitarianism, which did not place the institution of rules at the centre of moral practice. Mill believed that the direct pursuit of happiness is individually self-defeating, for if an agent is to achieve happiness, he must pursue, as ends in themselves, goals other than his own happiness. He also thought it collectively self-defeating, for a direct application of utilitarian principles would contain no guarantee that people's vital interests would be protected, and such a guarantee is one of the preconditions for the social cooperation which the Principle of Expediency requires.

If the ultimate goal of maximizing utility requires that actual agents endorse, manifestly, non-utilitarian principles, there is nothing absurd in the idea of a utilitarian defence for Mill's absolutist Principle of Liberty. The ground now clear, Gray attempts to show that Mill, perhaps correctly, believed that acceptance of his Principle of Liberty, though formally non-utilitarian, would be required by utilitarianism.

The Principle of Liberty states that the prevention of harm to others is the sole justification for limiting liberty. This principle is linked to Mill's utilitarianism through his theory of the vital interests. These interests play a similar role in Mill's philosophy to that played by "primary goods". In John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, the interests Mill regards as essential, are those in "security" and autonomy. According to Gray, the Principle of Liberty amounts to the claim that, unless these vital interests are threatened, no policy which attempts to prevent people from harming themselves, or to force them to help others, is justifiable.

Even in *Utilitarianism* Mill defended a utilitarian theory of moral right. Here he specifically discusses the right to security, whereas in *On Liberty* he discusses the right to liberty, which is grounded in the vital interest of human beings in autonomy. For human beings to flourish, an environment where autonomy and security are protected is essential. The importance of security has been universally appreciated, but why is autonomy so vital?

Mill's Doctrine of Liberty included his theory of the higher pleasures, and the Principle of Liberty was introduced to apply only to those in "the maturity of their faculties". Gray claims that Mill's writings on liberty make sense only when one appreciates the developmental and historical context of his conceptions of human nature and happiness. Mill's theory rests on two debatable conjectures about human beings in society, which lead to the conclusion of individualism, protection of individual liberty should be paramount. Wilson's conjectures are that "mature" human beings in "secure" societies would be prepared to sacrifice their autonomy for other benefits, and that without a strong right to liberty people cannot become or remain autonomous agents.

Mill had hoped to ground his theory of human nature in an empirical science of ethology, which would reveal the laws of development for the human character. But neither he nor any of his successors has devised an adequate ethological research programme. The theory thus remains untested, and consequently, says Principle, whose acceptability presupposes the truth of the theory, must remain in question. This may be weakness, but at least Mill does emerge as a subtle, systematic thinker, who offers an appealing version of utilitarianism which requires a strong respect for individual liberty itself.

Defenders of the traditional view of Mill as the confused, lapsed utilitarian could no doubt produce some textual evidence opposing Gray's thesis. But Gray describes his work as "A Defence", and may be forgiven for concentrating his attention on passages which are especially favourable to his interpretation. It is a great achievement to show that a consistent and plausible theme runs right through Mill's practical philosophy. After this book those who wish to play "Spot the Howler" with Mill's moral and political philosophy will face a lean time.

Prospecting in the Pleiad

Harold Beaver on the new Library of America series

The Library of America, he argued, was not "some immense gap-filling agency". The literature there to be assembled was the national culture, the many-volume Bible, as it were, of the national covenant.

Such was the missionary fervour with which the project was launched. The National Endowment for the Humanities (not then so called) got in on the act. But a mysterious sea-change intervened. Quite how, when, is not clear. But an undisclosed sum from the Endowment was allotted to the Modern Language Association for its newly created Committee for the Editions of American Authors (CEAA). The Committee's task was to plug a gap. The only full edition of Melville, for example, was still the British Constable edition from the 1920s. There had been no effort to collect a complete Poe since the Virginia edition of 1902. These old texts, in any case, were unreliable. Nor had there been any collected edition of Henry James or Henry Adams at all. Authority, completion, textual scholarship were urgently needed. At the auspices of the CEAA, editorial workshops were set up to produce a series of corporately validated texts by the best contemporary standards.

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Processional mysteries

Paula Neuss

The Chester Cycle
The University of Toronto
The University of Leeds

Queen Margaret had to miss the Domesday pageant at Coventry in 1457. The same fate befell me at both Leeds and Toronto this year. But perhaps it was more important to have been able to see plays whose material is less familiar, such as the *Nativity* containing a virginity test, where the doubting midwife receives a withered hand, subsequently cured by the Christ-child, for her intrusion. There were also episodes unique to the Chester cycle, like that of Balaam and his talking ass Burrell (which in Toronto bore a distinct resemblance to the March Hare).

Each production attempted as far as possible to reproduce the conditions of the original performances, using processional staging, with each pageant performed by a different group over a three-day holiday period (the Chester plays were performed on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Whit week during the sixteenth century). The Leeds production, by the Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies, directed by Jane Oakshott, was set in 1553 and the Toronto one, by the Poccili Ludique Societas, directed by David Parry, in 1572. The overall effect in Leeds was the more homogeneous since Meg Twycross had designed the costumes for the whole cycle, and the various angels and Christs did not differ as much as they did in Toronto.

The Chester cycle has been unpopular until now, and this renewed interest in it has been brought about by several scholarly and critical works, the authors of which were present at two symposia in Toronto organized by REED (Records of Early English Drama). Laurence Clopper recently edited the Chester records for REED, while R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills have not only edited the entire cycle for the EETS, but have recently brought out a volume, *Essays and Documents: with an Essay "Music in the Cycle"* by Richard Rastall (339pp. University of North Carolina Press, £30. 0 8078 1522 5). In which they show that far from being the earliest mystery cycle, as had previously been supposed, Chester is in fact the latest and did not achieve its full cyclic form until early in the sixteenth century. Thus the Chester cycle is actually Tudor, though there was an earlier, one-day Corpus Christi play which may have had a stationary rather than a processional performance in medieval times. Peter Travis, in his book *Dramatic Design in the Chester Cycle*, (310pp. University of Chicago Press, £11.95. 0 226 81164 6) argues further that this cycle shows a particularly Tudor historical consciousness.

The processional staging was brilliantly successful. Leeds used three stations and Toronto four, both within university grounds which one could argue, had some resemblance to medieval streets. The wagons

followed one after another with scarcely any disorganization. In Toronto the gap at the final station after the first play before the long second play of the Fall and Cain and Abel was filled by a performance of *Robin Hood and the Friar*. The inevitably cramped space on the wagons was supplemented by using the ground in front.

In both productions the Painters' Shepherds play was one of the most engaging, no doubt partly owing to the use of a real baby for Christ, and the play turned out to be quite as entertaining as its more popular rival the Wakefield Second Shepherds play (probably the best known and most often performed medieval play). There were the shepherds spend a great deal of time carping about the injustice of the gentry and the nagging of their wives—in this cycle we watched some generally good-natured fellows larking about rather like overgrown schoolboys with no pretence that they needed to spend any time looking after sheep. While therefore there could be no pun on sheep's Lamb of God like that made in the Wakefield play, these shepherds' ceremonial meal (as Peter Travis points out in his book) can be seen as a parody of the mass, and he must have been pleased that in the Toronto production the shepherds shared their bread with the audience.

This play also managed the shift from the comic to the serious, sometimes thought a problem in medieval drama, without any difficulty. The much more difficult, because more abrupt, shift of mood from farce to tragedy in the Massacre of the Innocents, from laughter at the cowardly behaviour of Herod's two knights, Sir Waradrake and Sir Lancherdeep, to horror when a dead baby is held up on a soldier's spear's end, was also successful.

One of the most important aspects of the plays is their commercial quality, which on paper is more likely to go unnoticed than their piety. They were originally put on "not only for the augmentation... of the... faith... but also for the common wealth and prosperity of this city". It was hoped to make money out of them. Each guild was concerned with its own profit as well as with that of the city, and therefore with doing its own play better than the next, for one thing about processional staging is that you can see a play like a stage and decided to miss the next one. Also there was unlikely to be the kind of overall pattern Travis argues for his book. The structure of a cycle is more like that of the *Canterbury Tales*, in which each story-teller is vying for prize.

Each pageant with an "unpopular" subject had its own attraction, such as Balaam's Ass and the Tudor players could count on their audiences having some unusual effect to look forward to, since they would have seen the play before. The revivals did not have this advantage but no pageant was ever playing to an empty space, even in the pouring rain. Though there were larger numbers watching the Crucifixion there were still some waiting for the Harrowing of Hell, with its Rum-Tum-Tugger of a Devil.

Fifty years on: Violet Trefusis

The TLS of June 1, 1933, carried the following review of Violet Trefusis's novel *Tandem*: "Tandem, because though Madame Demetriades had three daughters, Marguerite whose perfect digestion was considered a little vulgar did not count, while of the two others Pénélope was always more brilliant, more in the limelight than Irene. Pénélope, who at ten had written a comic which revealed her future gifts as a writer, had no inferiority complex at all, and was perfectly equal to entertaining all the guests in her mother's salon, though they included Robert de Montecarlo, Edmond de Polignac, Marcel Croust, Claude Debussy, Barres, and a few more. Young Mr. Gottschalk was so terrified by the blizzard atmosphere that he quickly married the petite Irene and carried her off to his English home."



Giovanni Belzoni (1778-1823), a posthumous lithograph showing the explorer with some of the Egyptian antiquities which he brought to England, including, on the right "The Young Memnon", which impressed both Keats and Shelley after its arrival at the British Museum in 1818; an item in a exhibition reviewed here.

Remains to be seen

David Alexander

The Inspiration of Egypt
Brighton Museum and Art Gallery

We are all more or less aware that Egypt has had a fascination for the British, but few comprehensive attempts have been made to assess Egypt's influence on British artists, travellers and designers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This gap has now been filled by a most imaginative exhibition organized by Brighton Museum. The exhibition, which has over 400 exhibits including ceramics and furniture and other objects as well as pictures of all kinds, is accompanied by an extremely valuable catalogue written by the exhibition organizer, Patrick Connor, with David Beevers and Briony Lowell (168pp, with 55 illustrations, £2 post free from Brighton Museum, Church Street, Brighton BN1 1UE).

The early material is of necessity rather thin; few British travellers reached Egypt in the eighteenth century and their influence was not very important. It was 1801 before any pictures resulting from a British expedition to Lower Egypt were published: the aquatints based on Luigi Mayer's watercolours, three of which are shown from the incomparable collection of pictures associated with travels to the Middle East formed by Rodney Seagrist. The Egyptian influence on design often came not directly but via Rome and other continental capitals; thus pyramids built by British architects were based on the acutely angled tomb of Calus Cestius rather than the pyramids of Giza. Wedgwood used designs by Monfaucon and Fischer von Erlach, neither of whom had been to Egypt and both of whom treated Egyptian forms as springboards for the imagination. Even after the French invasion of Egypt, and the publication of the sketches made by Baron Danton, Piranesi's designs continue to provide ideas, notably for the furniture designed by Thomas Hope; to emphasize Hope's importance, the exhibition contains a reconstruction of the Egyptian fireplace in the "Closet" of his house in Duke's Street and pieces of his furniture are also shown.

While the vogue for Egyptian motifs came with the search for the sea which pre-dates the French invasion of Egypt, it was undoubtedly the latter which turned a minority taste into a fashion more widely known, and which was to have considerable impact as a fitting style for domestic and industrial buildings. In 1812 the building purporting to be an Egyptian temple appeared in the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly by P. F. Robinson, a catalogue comment ironically stating belief that this is an authentic Egyptian design "undercuts the originality of Robinson's design". It was there that the astonishing Giovanni Belzoni, who brought the first group of major antiquities to England in 1818, held an exhibition of models and drawings of the sites he had explored. With the installation of some of his discoveries in the British Museum the spell of Egypt was exercised directly by Egyptian remains rather than through continental engravings.

One of the most interesting and original aspects of the exhibition is in which it shows how Victorian designers derived a new language of pattern shown by artists such as Owen Jones, Christopher Dresser and E. J. Godwin. It is well illustrated that Egyptian remains rather than through continental engravings.

British interest in Egypt did not remain the monopoly of painters and antiquaries and the final section of the catalogue traces the growth of Egyptian tourism. Commercially, it followed and appropriately enough the purchaser of Poynter's *Pyramid of Egypt* the largest painting in the exhibition was, one other than Sir John Hawkshaw, the engineer who reported favourably on the idea of a Suez canal. The exhibition is at Brighton until July 17. It will be at Manchester City Art Gallery from August 4 to September 17.

commentary

Historical tragical-pastoral

Harold Hobson

ANGELO BROLOCO, 'IL RUZANTE'
The Comedy without a Title
Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

In *The Comedy without a Title*, Shared Experience introduces to London a Renaissance dramatist, Angelo Broloco (called Il Ruzante, the fast talker) who, though frequently played in France and Italy, is unknown in Britain. A favourite writer of Galileo's, Ruzante belonged to a family of wealthy merchants, was born fifty years before Shakespeare, was a friend of the aristocracy, organized a troupe of players from the best people in Padua, received the education of a man of breeding, and administered the family estates, yet in his plays showed no conception whatever of the feudal nature of society. In the four of his pieces which Shared Experience have moulded into their evening's entertainment there are no dukes, princes, priests, artists or scientists, there are no oppressors and no oppressed. There are just peasants, more peasants, and nobody but peasants. Ruzante himself, despite his birth, his upbringing, and his financial activities, could pass himself off as a Paduan peasant so convincingly that these bucolic and rustic characters took him for one of themselves. He is a remarkable dramatist, and his work is

startlingly adapted and directed by Mike Alfreds. He did not either ignore or admire the élite; he simply ignored them. His interest lies in the fact that he was an ostentatiously pastoral writer who was also deeply cynical and tragic in outlook.

By far the best, though not the most ambitious, of the four plays is the last: "Winter" (the plays show the four seasons) in the Paduan countryside. Menego (Philip Voss) is an old and dignified peasant who is convinced that he is going to die of hunger. Wind, rain and poor harvest are the enemies of Ruzante's characters, and they rack their unfortunate minds with bizarre theories of the best ways of combating them. Menego hopelessly suggests that if he never relieved his bowels, all his food would remain inside him, and so he would never be hungry. He is discouraged when his friends, who seem to meet the challenge of Nature more cheerfully, assure him that he is mistaken. At this point an angel (John Price) appears, and, in one of Ruzante's rare moments of compassion, tells the old man not to be afraid. After death "he goes on pretty much as it has done before, only more richly and more happily. The hunters go on hunting, and those who love solitude and piety sing praises to the glory of God. This is a beautiful passage, full of sympathy, and John Price speaks it with the quiet and subdued urgency of one who is trying to comfort a frightened child. Listening to him gives the same peaceful joy as

looking at the illustrations in a Book of Hours. And when he has finished speaking, and returned to the place whence he came, what happens? Why, the old man dies, of course. In happiness, in confidence, in peaceful expectation of the fields of amaranth that lie on the other side of the grave? Not a bit of it: he dies in torment and anguish, writhing on the ground in agony and despair, in a cruel, piercing spotlight that isolates him on the suddenly darkened stage. Ruzante is a cynic; he leads you up the garden path, to show you not the lilies and the roses, but the dungheap.

In "Summer", the second play, there is the same kind of willful and mischievous deception. The only character of the evening who is not actually a peasant, a soldier, his armour battered and blood running down his legs, rushes onto the stage, vowing that he will never go to war again. James Smith plays this part with spirit and panache, arguing against war, taking the audience into his confidence, putting the Renaissance pacifist case with swashbuckling authority, and then, just when he has worked himself wholly into our sympathies, he is shown by Ruzante to be a coward, a liar, a braggart, a person infinitely contemptible. With engaging humour, the name he gives him is Ruzante.

The most substantial play is the first, "Spring", in the Paduan countryside. A prologue urges us all to be natural, to throw aside all our conventions, get rid of our pretences, to return to the

simplicity and honesty of the rural pastures, and think of love and marriage. This prologue is well spoken by Jimmy Yuill, with no suggestion of what all this simple-hearted goodness means in his artful author. It turns out, of course, to be sexual licence, cuckoldry, absolute heartlessness, and the irresistible call of the privy. There is murder, too: murder without that repentance which in the last moment of the third play, "Autumn", causes John Price to show us his deadly hands with horror, and to raise his terrified and supplicating eyes to heaven. Ruzante is an outstanding dramatist, though not an agreeable one, and Shared Experience have added to their laurels (though not, perhaps, to their wealth) by giving us *The Comedy without a Title*.

The evening, instructive, socially and individually revealing, adding considerably to our knowledge of the European theatre, is spoilt by the poverty and unpitiful flimsiness of the play's language. I assure Mike Alfreds that there are more words in the English language for backside and evacuation than rise and shit. Some audiences may be thrilled to hear these words spoken by actors now and again; but to hear them repeated with relentless monotony for two-and-a-half hours must be a bore to even the most ardent student of coprology. Both the translator and the author (if the philosophy of his angel is true) would do well to buy a mouthwash, a clean typewriter and a dictionary.

Local lore

Ronald Hayman

ROBERT HOLMAN

Other Worlds
Royal Court Theatre

The London theatre all too seldom rises to the level achieved at the Royal Court with Richard Wilson's finely cast production of Robert Holman's finely written play *Other Worlds*. There is nothing sensationalist, catnippery or particularly newsworthy about it. It is not formally adventurous and it does not attach itself to the life of any well-known man or woman.

The opening of the play is almost as hard to stage as the opening of *The Tempest*, with fishermen standing unsteadily on a beach, lantern in hand, buffeted by the savage storm that is wrecking a ship just off the coast. It is 1797, the fifth year of the war against the French. A Napoleonic invasion is threatened, and it does not occur to these men that the North Yorkshire coast is an unlikely point for a landing. As we see later, they cannot even tell the difference between a Frenchman and a gorilla dressed in a jersey.

Robert Holman gleams comedy from the local ignorance but without being patronizing in his attitude to it. Towards the end he makes slightly too much of the attitudes formed when two of the most sympathetic characters join forces to do educational work, but throughout most of the action he shows that ignorance is only one of the factors causing the suffering of these fishermen and farm-workers. It may be typical of them to believe that worms, swallows, and even a cornucopia of corn effect, but enlightenment would neither reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies nor erode the Puritanical hostility to extramarital love.

The power of the play depends partly on its truthfulness, partly on its tension and atmosphere, partly on Holman's skill in manipulating transparent and unfamiliar narrative material. In some ways the subject-matter is reminiscent of plays such as *The Whilby Lighthouse Disaster*, constructed for a regional repertory company around an actual incident which has found its way into local lore but this action is not merely of local interest. There is great resonance in the classier, better-known personalities, classes, generations and groups of people who are not even in rivalry but simply different from each other.

The play's construction is unorthodox, with the first act set twenty years later than the second, and the third continuing from the first, but it is better to have one long flashback than a series of short ones, and the structural device produces interesting problems for both writer and actors. For the writer it is partly a matter of creating a story which can move forward by moving backwards, and he does this by introducing mystifies in the first act which are explained in the second. What started the enmity between the fishermen at Robin Hood's Bay and the villagers in Fylingthorpe? If Betsy is not really the niece of Anne Wheateley, the farmer's mother, why does she call her "aunt" and why was she taken into this household where she is neither quite a servant nor quite a member of the family? What caused the hatred between Anne and her husband? The story moves slowly but satisfyingly backwards and forwards, powerfully suggesting the bleak emotional climate in this cold and underpopulated part of Yorkshire at the end of the eighteenth century. The writing evokes considerable sympathy for the characters — even for the less likeable ones. The farmer, John Wheateley, for example, cuts a pathetic figure when he comes into the farmhouse, messy and stinking after falling into the pig-trough, and cannot even muster enough authority to make Betsy obey his orders. But when drunk he is formidable.

During the first and third acts Jim Broadbent does well in this subtly nuanced role, and in the second he appears, quite plausibly, as Richard Wheateley, the self-confident father who sets standards of aggressiveness his ineffectual son will copy. Juliet Stevenson turns in two warm and vibrant performances as the nineteen-year-old Betsy and as the affectionate girl who will die shortly after giving birth to her. Paul Copley, who has to play the same fisherman in all three acts, gives unforced performances at both ages, and his restraint is moving when Joe is confronted with a daughter who looks so much like her mother. Rosamund Leach is also required to age twenty years. We see little of her in the second act, but she gives an authoritative old lady in the first and third. Lesley Dunlop is affecting as Mary, and Peter O'Farrell, who appears as a gorilla and a fairground conjuror, gives touching performances in both roles.

New Oxford Books:

Religion
& TheologyHenley Henson
Owen Chadwick

This is a study of church and society between the two World Wars as seen through the eyes of an able, caustic, individualistic churchman. Herbert Henson held strong opinions on all subjects, and was at times the most unpopular parson among the Churches. But by courage he won a rural respect, and by compassion he won from some a smiling admiration. £18.50

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the Old TestamentThe Ordering of Life in
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The author outlines the ethical teaching of the sages of Israel and the complex of ideas which supported it. He then goes on to show how dissonance between this theoretical framework and experience gave rise to grave religious problems concerning the nature of Israel's God and his relation with his people. Paperback £3.50
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Dr Ziesler's starting point is Paul's view of Jesus Christ as marking the end of an era and the beginning of a new world and a new humanity. He considers the implications of this centrality of Christ in relation to the people of God, to the new possibilities of human life, and to the Law, and follows Pauline Christianity into the generation after Paul himself and then into the second century. Paperback £3.50
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It is fifty years since the Church of England entered into full communion with the Old Catholic Church, and each church recognizes the catholicity and independence of the other. This collection of essays by members of both churches celebrates the agreement made at Bonn in 1931. Both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the recently retired Archbishop of Utrecht have contributed chapters to the discussion of Old Catholic life, liturgy, and theology. £12.50

Cyril of Alexandria:
Select LettersEdited by
Lionel R. Wickham

Cyril Bishop of Alexandria from 412 to 444, was in some ways the most influential of all the classic Greek fathers. In Christology, all subsequent writers have had to take account of him whether as model or adversary. This book reveals the reasons for his influence. £15 Oxford Early Christian Texts

Oxford
University Press

remainders

Eric Korn

Enough has been said, by me at any rate, about forgery, fraud, cozenage, imposture, superchérie (the title, of course, of a newly-discovered Colette MS), illaueation, bamboozery and pifandoodle. A way then, at least for a spell, with Payne Collier. Thomas Wise, R. H. Heame, Cora Pearl, Paul Krammer, Cyril Burt, Frances Pym, Arthur Gordon Pym (at least one of the names in this list is not a fraud), Geoffrey Howe, Cat Geoffrey, Mouscuddler, the Cat for Disarmament, Geoffrey Croyon, Washington Irving, Clifford Irving, Henry Irving (who was really John Henry Brodribb), Edward Irving and all the Irvingites, Ossian, Ireland, Tommy Chatterton and all the Marvellous Boys.

Let us turn to something clean, straightforward and manly, of which you could not ask for anything more so than Finn Havnecvick's *English for Fishermen*, published by Fabritius and Sønner (Oslo, 1951), in their ever-admired "Fagbøker for Fiskere" series. (Other fagbøks include Hodson's invaluable *Trål og Trålfiske* and Jo Norling's *Pogo på Snurrepiske*; "Pogo", a folk-hero among trawlermen. I believe, is obviously related to the English "pogy", a variety of menhaden, or cod, if not to "pogy", a small Arctic whale; while the at-first-glance obscure "snurrepiske" is evidently a compound of "fisc", the Scottish legal term for the right of the Crown to the escheat of vacant estates, and the onomatopoeic "snurr", an expression of uncontrollable disgust at the machinations of Scottish lawyers.)

English for Fishermen, which despite its title is largely in Norse, at least at the outset, comes bound in sturdy and reliable boards with a stout canvas backstrip, in a reassuring shade of North Sea green, portraying in a staid and trustworthy manner, (I have always wanted to run a littoral tavern called "The Mariner's Hollow", "Every Day for Food or Play", Coleridge.) What the Norwegian is shouting is possibly "Have you any steam on the windlass?", which turns up as early as page 21 to illustrate the verb "to have": "John's father has a fishing boat. The boat has four oars. Has your father a fishing boat, Jim?" With Jim's arrival, however, the dialogue turns sinister: "May I ask you to do me a service? Can you swim? Must you go now?" - which is doubtless where Jim gets the push and goes to feed the menhaden, and serve him right for trying to mix with the men when it's notorious that his father doesn't have a fishing boat, being a resident ballet critic of the *Grinaby* Pilot.

Every quirk of English grammar is illuminated by the same relentless cold fishy light: a few mackerels, many ballbuds, much ferring; the fisherman hauled in the rope/ the rope was hauled in by the fisherman. There is also plenty on the English way of life ("This is a kettle. In the kettle there is coffee. Some people like condensed milk in their coffee") and wholesome advice on how to conduct oneself in Fleetwood or Lissienow: "You have some leisure hours when your boat is in port and should use your time in a practical way. There is much to be seen, monuments, beautiful churches, houses of unusual architecture."

There's obviously an infinitely expandable market for specialist language books. Gulf Airplane for oil

riggers, Spanish for bull-fighters, Japanese for robots, Turkish for deconstructionists, Etruscan for brain surgeons, Wendish for surveyors. Have you a theodolite? Yes, I have several theodolites. Jim's theodolite is green, but Lydia's (the-of-Lydia) is purple. (Skprz. plurr-ply). No doubt one could go on.

Jacob Tonson, publisher of a sound eighteenth-century edition of Shakespeare, took an opportunity to rubbish the opposition:

N.B. Whereas one R. Walker has proposed to pirate all Shakespeare's Plays, but through ignorance of what Plays are Shakespeare's, did in several Advertisements propose to print OEDIPUS KING OF THEBES, as one of Shakespeare's Plays; and has since printed TITUS THE KING LEAR instead of Shakespeare's. The World will therefore judge how likely they are to have a complete Collection of Shakespeare's Plays from the said R. Walker.

This advertisement appears on the last leaf of Tonson's *The Tragedy of Lear*, the *Eldst son of Brutus* by William Shakespeare.

Meanwhile, back in California, there is a disturbing tendency on the part of the locals to turn upside-down. "The most logical, comprehensive, and medically sound health care program," affirms Robert M. Martin, president of Gravity Guidance, Inc. in a tone that brooks little rebuttal. What he is selling is, essentially, a rugged steel towel-rail to be set at door-jamb height, with hooks for the feet. Some precautions, wisely, are taken to prevent the rail falling off the wall ("exclusive design prevents bar disengagement") or your feet falling out of their steel screw-in sockets ("Gravity Guidance Invention Boots TM with snug cuffs and sturdy latches for security"). This reassured, you can hang upside-down in some convenient corner of the house until every thought you ever had comes rattling out through your ears. This will begin to compensate for the years you have spent just loafing about upright, or in Dr Martin's searing phraseology "allowing gravity to affect your bodies unidirectionally." Use the Gravity Guidance System TM to demand more from your body," he urges, but those of us not in the habit of demanding things from our bodies (sometimes, if we ask them nicely, they will try to get through a whole day without surrendering to gravity entirely) will shrink from his pictures of reverse squats and oblique twists and the reverse military press - with a barbell that, if you weaken, will drop not on your toe but on your chin - and the advanced equipment "for a more comprehensive inversion conditioning program." If the Lord had wanted us to bang around inverted, He'd have made us batilar.

Meanwhile, right-side-up in Canada, literature flourishes as a parasite on vice, as it has I suppose always done everywhere. Once-staid Ontario now has a Mediterranean profusion of lotteries, whose proceeds are devoted to virtuous or enjoyable objectives like sculpture for metropolitan parkettes and artistic tyroloam seats for the shopping malls (and yes, if you recall the row about the goose with Christmas decoration found their necks, art won over commerce and

scarves were removed). But there is a more direct benefit: losing lottery tickets entitle you to a discount on selected novels of Canadian Content. An admirable scheme, I thought, but a sour local pointed to a sign on a local jewellery-and-notions store as emblematic of Canadian Content: "Pick out the design of your choice and let us put a Maple Leaf on it."

Sour locals flourish here, and get very cynical when I tell them how well-conducted, well-mannered and well-provided their cities are: how unpolluted, fair, and rich in bright Trillium and guizzical moose their unjammed, unceaved highways. But Canadian modesty (being modest, they think of it as the Canadian inferiority complex) is a wondrous thing; on one day I heard someone complain about the splendid proliferation of galleries of experimental art in Toronto on the weird grounds that American tourists might laugh at them, and read a newspaper that betrayed an even more bizarre sensitivity: "Challenged by fancy imports, giggled at by U.S. visitors, Canada's stubby brown beer bottle..." Happy the land that has nothing to fear save that its beer-bottles are being mocked...

Well it can, and I'd like to tell you what the fine ladies and gentlemen in the cabin class are doing now. Enjoying two hundred pounds' worth of your envy, that's what. While you listlessly fork in strands of rexine and slivers of scratchy iced cabbage, doused in a glutinous bitter dressing full of the natural goodness of ethylene glycol, they are enjoying two dozen of the finest Arachon oysters, washed down with an impeccably chilled Sancerre, skilfully uncorked by stewards, each one a superb physical specimen. While you are trying to pick almonds of cracker from your bleeding palates, they are enjoying a mouthful of bouillabaisse, alive with gemlike crablets, with the most carefully nursed baby squidlings, with red peppers and a tiny Andalusian sunrise. After that comes a mangosteen sorbet with a glass of rare Calvados to open a iron nonnom.

While your ears are being insulted by Apalooza Goosers and his Chicken Liver Band (no, the headphones don't

come off), they are listening to quite a decent string quartet - not absolutely in the front rank, as we have to keep some pleasures for the first class passengers - while the chef puts the finishing touches to superlative steaks, trusmuscant rarity. Your gob of protein, by contrast, a zoological and bacteriological scandal to begin with, have been tenderized by prolonged numbing in the carious gums of air hosts and hostesses prematurely retired as health risks.

Enjoy your rice, which has been boiled-in-the-bag until each grain is enrobed by a monomolecular film of polythene, your greens, choiced bloom of the filler beds, the strict onion buds with which we have mixed your entrée, your salad and (yes, too late) your raspberry sponge. What joy your distant dyspepsia brings to the front cabin, where tiny pellets four are served with a Hine old before aviation, or an unsurpassable Stilton is set off by a port of Pleistocene vintage.

After the meal, you shall have fire drill, which will reveal the inadequacies of the safety equipment, while they put at jewelled hookahs (or hookers according to taste): they will watch *Bicycle Thieves* or *Duck Soup* or *Butterfly Potemkin* or *Abel Gance's Napoleon* projected onto a cloud (you are getting a dubbed and poorly edited remake of *Frederic Wornum*). Should they wish to enjoy the view, they will see auroras, technicolor comets; they shall have stars at elbow and foot, and angels with psalteries will hang upon their crystal cassetments, while you peer through rheumy perspex at scenes of appalling desolation and guilt.

Thank you for flying Parademonian, and we look forward to seeing you again soon - sooner than you expect in some cases, for sadistic immigration officers have instructions to reject you with all the comely you so richly merit, as undesirable alien paupers.

on August 13th 1765, when Gnspar de Portola and his expedition crossed the Los Angeles River and proceeded down what is now Wilshire Boulevard. Geographically, at least, Gaspar was a wise man from the East, and Western Culture is surely what he found, not what he brought...

Good afternoon. This is your captain speaking, welcoming aboard Flight 101 those of you who have had the decency to pay a full fare.

Those cheap mothers in the economy class, staring in dumb dismay at the swill we have just served you in the guise of lunch, are a lot less cocky now than you were a while back when you bought your tickets. "My, my," you whinnied, clutching your snivings to your tiny souls, "two hundred pounds less than the normal fare, and the service can't be two hundred pounds worse, can it?"

Well it can, and I'd like to tell you what the fine ladies and gentlemen in the cabin class are doing now. Enjoying two hundred pounds' worth of your envy, that's what. While you listlessly fork in strands of rexine and slivers of scratchy iced cabbage, doused in a glutinous bitter dressing full of the natural goodness of ethylene glycol, they are enjoying two dozen of the finest Arachon oysters, washed down with an impeccably chilled Sancerre, skilfully uncorked by stewards, each one a superb physical specimen. While you are trying to pick almonds of cracker from your bleeding palates, they are enjoying a mouthful of bouillabaisse, alive with gemlike crablets, with the most carefully nursed baby squidlings, with red peppers and a tiny Andalusian sunrise. After that comes a mangosteen sorbet with a glass of rare Calvados to open a iron nonnom.

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Among this week's contributors

TOMAS ASSE is a Fellow of New Hall, Cambridge.

JOHN ASHBERY's collections of poems include *Shadow Train*, 1982.

JOHN BATCHELOR is the author of *The Edwardian Novelists*, 1982.

HAROLD BRAVER is the editor of *The Science Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe*, 1976.

SAMUEL BEAN's most recent book, *Britain Against Itself: The Political Contradictions of Collectivism*, was published last year.

CAROLINE BLACKWOOD is the co-author of the cookery book, *Dorling, You Shouldn't Have Gone To So Much Trouble*, 1980.

SARAH BRAFORO's *Disraeli* was published last year.

W. R. BNOCK is Professor Emeritus at the University of Glasgow, and author of *Scotus Americanus*, 1982.

HUGH BROGAN's books include *Too Much*, 1973, and *The Times Reports of the American Civil War*, 1975.

CHAD BROWN is co-author of *The Book of Royal Lists*, 1982.

JAMES CAMPBELL was Editor of the *New Edinburgh Review* until 1982, and has edited a new *Edinburgh Review Anthology*.

TERENCE CAVE is the author of *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*, 1979.

MARTIN CLARK's *Antioch, Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed* was published in 1977.

MARGARET DODDY is the author of *A Natural Passion*, a study of Richard Scott's novels.

NORMAN GASH's books include *Sir Robert Peel*, 1972.

VICTORIA GLENONINNO's biography of Vita Sackville-West will be published later this year.

SIR HAROLD HOBSON is an honorary fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.

CHRISTOPHER HOPKINS's collection of stories, *Private Parts and Other Tales*, was published last year.

HUGH KANNAN's *A Colder Eye*, an account of the Irish Revival, will be published later this year.

ERIC KOAN is an antiquarian bookseller in London.

STEPHAN KOSK's first volume of *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain* was published in 1981; Volume II will be published in 1984.

RICHARD LINDLEY is a co-author of *What Philosophy Does*, 1978.

MICHAEL MASON is a lecturer in English at University College, London.

KENNETH O. MOROAN's most recent book is *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1890*, 1981.

PAULA NEUSS's most recent book is an edition and translation of *The Creation of the World*, 1983.

STANLEY OLSON is working on a biography of John Singer Sargent.

W. H. WALSH's books include *Hegelian Ethics*, 1969, and *Kant's Critique of Metaphysics*, 1975.

We should like to remind readers that poems submitted for publication in the TLS should be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for return in the event of their not being accepted.

on August 13th 1765, when Gnspar de Portola and his expedition crossed the Los Angeles River and proceeded down what is now Wilshire Boulevard. Geographically, at least, Gaspar was a wise man from the East, and Western Culture is surely what he found, not what he brought...

Good afternoon. This is your captain speaking, welcoming aboard Flight 101 those of you who have had the decency to pay a full fare.

Those cheap mothers in the economy class, staring in dumb dismay at the swill we have just served you in the guise of lunch, are a lot less cocky now than you were a while back when you bought your tickets. "My, my," you whinnied, clutching your snivings to your tiny souls, "two hundred pounds less than the normal fare, and the service can't be two hundred pounds worse, can it?"

Well it can, and I'd like to tell you what the fine ladies and gentlemen in the cabin class are doing now. Enjoying two hundred pounds' worth of your envy, that's what. While you listlessly fork in strands of rexine and slivers of scratchy iced cabbage, doused in a glutinous bitter dressing full of the natural goodness of ethylene glycol, they are enjoying two dozen of the finest Arachon oysters, washed down with an impeccably chilled Sancerre, skilfully uncorked by stewards, each one a superb physical specimen. While you are trying to pick almonds of cracker from your bleeding palates, they are enjoying a mouthful of bouillabaisse, alive with gemlike crablets, with the most carefully nursed baby squidlings, with red peppers and a tiny Andalusian sunrise. After that comes a mangosteen sorbet with a glass of rare Calvados to open a iron nonnom.

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Giraudoux on War

Sir, - I have not yet seen the National Theatre's revival of *La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu*, but Harold Hobson (Commentary, May 20) seems so assured as to its meaning that one feels an alternative view should be put.

Giraudoux's message is not the frightening (and irrational) one that war is caused by those who oppose it, but that, since the Trojan War came so near to being avoided, so might other wars if only people would share Hector's genuine love of peace and determination to avoid aggression. Given his choice of subject, it was hardly possible for Giraudoux to pretend the Trojan War had never taken place. But, until his final, uncharacteristic slip, Hector's march has been one of triumph; even Ulysses agrees to give peace a chance. The message of the play is one of optimism, of appeasement, which was why Claudel wrote of it in his diary: "Cette apologie de la lâcheté et de la paix à tout prix est répugnante." It was not until *Electre*, two years later, that Giraudoux gave way to the pessimism that saw war as inevitable, even indeed a necessary evil.

Incidentally, why the pedantic emphasis, in the National Theatre's publicity for its other current French show, on *De Museset*? I have recently noticed *De Museset* in a Nottingham Playhouse programme. Are we soon to have *De Montaigne* and *De Balzac*?

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to the editor

the pro-Boers. What has dwindled has been the willingness to publish these arguments in wartime. Morley's Memorandum of 1914 and Lansdowne's Memorandum of 1916 were published after the "Great War". During the Second World War it was not so much a matter of direct government censorship as the moral pressures on publishers and no doubt, their own convictions. These were eloquently explained in a long letter to my father in 1941 by Sir Geoffrey Faber, refusing to publish the "excluded memoranda" on a negotiated peace which had been privately circulated.

Then, again, the Falklands show suggests that voices like David Tinker's (*A Message from the Falklands*) tend to get drowned by the flood of instant campaign histories, good (Max Hastings), bad and indifferent. In the columns of the TLS and elsewhere we are still marching with Monty to Alamein and now even, with rekindled enthusiasm, across the Somme with Haig. Will it take a nuclear war to diminish the public demand - or the publishers' capacity to satisfy it?

ADRIAN LIDDELL HART.
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Command performance

Hugh Brogan

ROBERT H. FERRELL (Editor)

The Eisenhower Diaries
445pp. Norton. £15.25.
0 393 01432 0

Robert Ferrell is a lucky man. When Harry Truman's private diary was to be edited for publication, Professor Ferrell was asked to do the job. It was not yet out of the way when he was called to the Eisenhower Library at Abilene, Kansas, to edit Ike's diary. And only a few weeks ago it was reported that he was "examining and collating" the letters from Harry Truman to his wife which have turned up in Independence, Mo. No doubt he will publish them soon.

He deserves his good fortune: he is an experienced historian and a competent editor. Perhaps he has pushed his luck a little, however, with these Eisenhower diaries. There are far too many signs of haste in the editing. The one which would, I think, have caused Eisenhower most confusion between the two General Jacksons. On May 3, 1955 Ike noted, with military piety, that it was ninety-two years since Jackson was shot. He was thinking of Stonewall at the battle of Chancellorsville. Professor Ferrell supposes him to be alluding to the attempted assassination of Andrew, in 1835, and writes a long note on that assumption. It is the most glaring of too many blunders. I found myself thinking that at least the typographical errors should have been put right for the British edition, until I realized that there is no true British edition. The diaries were first published in the United States in 1961. Perhaps they did not sell as well as the publishers had hoped. At my rate, Messrs Norton have simply dumped on the British market (or perhaps I should say, on British literary editors) some spare copies of the American edition, no doubt hoping that the second launching will improve sales. It is good marketing, but bad manners. *Conventio impiorum*. I could furnish quite a long list of small but tiresome editorial mistakes. They must have been noticed by some of the American reviewers. I do not think that Messrs Norton have any business sending the unreviewed first edition over to England for notice, not

at least, in 1983; nor for charging £15.25, for a book whose dollar price was \$19.95.

Yet it is easy to sympathize with the publishers for the fix they were in, if not for their method of getting out of it. Ferrell has done all he could to make the Eisenhower diaries palatable to the common reader and almost all he could to make them useful to scholars; but there is no denying that they will be found heavy going by all except those with a serious professional interest in Eisenhower and his times. The book does not have the misgivings of a brisk best-seller. For one thing, it is not really a diary. It seems to have been begun as a unit diary in the Philippines in 1935, when Major Eisenhower was General MacArthur's chief of staff. It soon became a private document in which Ike could let off steam about his posturing superiors. As it developed over the years (sometimes written in longhand, sometimes typed, sometimes dictated) it became an *aide-memoire* in which Eisenhower could record incidents he might later need to remember accurately, or his understanding of problems as they arose, or his estimate of colleagues and subordinates, or his own views at dramatic moments in his story (the memorandum he wrote on the night before D-Day is especially interesting in this respect). It helped him to clarify his thoughts, and might be useful in later years, whether for lecturers at staff colleges (he rightly thought that his experience as commander of the Allied armies in the West was of great professional and historical interest) or for himself, if he ever wrote his memoirs, as eventually he did. But he never tried to keep a day-to-day record of his life, or felt moved to write about anything except his professional concerns. There is nothing about his rendering, his pastimes, his financial affairs, or sex (the one reference to his alleged mistress is in a most unlovely strain). For Ike, his memo book was a business document.

Precisely there lies its fascination and value for historians. Nothing clutters the picture of a soldier and then a statesman grappling with history. There are large omissions: almost nothing was written in 1952, the most decisive year in Eisenhower's life. So we do not get any light on one of his few base actions: his failure, during the election campaign, to defend General

Marshall against Joe McCarthy (the owed nothing to Marshall). What is included, more than makes up for the lacunae (and for the fact that there are suspiciously few references to Richard Nixon in the heavily-abridged post-Presidential pages). From now on anyone who wishes to understand Ike will have to turn first to this book. It is an impressively intelligent and honest self-portrait.

It lacks the charm that Harry Truman's hot temper and unguarded style gave to his own memo book. Ike was almost never unguarded, once he had got away from MacArthur. At one point he comments on the struggle he had waged over the years to control his temper. He succeeded magnificently, and thus freed himself to analyse dispassionately whatever concerned him. Ferrell quite rightly stresses that this analytical strain is what gives the book its value, for it corrects the tediously hand impression left by Ike's public papers. The man of the diaries is anything but bland. Rather, he is formidable.

In some respects, to be sure, he was endearingly simple. When in 1949 he had to record some fulsome compliments from Thomas E. Dewey, who was trying to talk him into running for the Presidency, he said "the mere writing of such things almost makes me dive under the table" (The flatness failed of its purpose). In another place he remarks that "my family and America [are] the only real passions of my life". Among the members of his family who meant most to him was his younger brother Milton - he thought Milton the best qualified of all Americans to be President. He found it easy to like people - Harry Truman, for example (it is a pity they fell out). Even when he had to record strong disapproval, and even, once or twice, dislike, he never did so in an ignoble, petty, personal fashion. He saw himself as the great conciliator, the prophet of the middle-of-the-road. The only trace of pique in all these pages occurs when it seems to him that he is being written down as too passive a military leader. He is careful to record his claim to be an enterprising, energetic, attacking commander, instancing his role in North Africa and his responsibility for the Salerno landings (I leave it to others to settle whether this was really a decision to be proud of). All in all, it is easy to see

why so many people liked Ike; and easy to forget that one did not always do so oneself.

The dominant impression is of enormous competence. There was a story put about during Eisenhower's Presidency that he owed his success to his staff, especially to General Bedell Smith, who did the work while the chief played golf. Ike confirms this impression to the extent that he places the greatest possible value on a good staff, and is generous in his tributes to the men and women who worked for him; but no reader can doubt that his was the master hand. For one thing, it is not easy to build up a good staff unless you know exactly what to do with it, and are a sound judge of men. Ike's judgement of people was almost faultless. Again and again he sums up a character with a neatness that historians will be hard put to it to equal. For example:

(11 June 1943) General Montgomery is a very able, dynamic type of army commander. I personally think that the only thing he needs is a strong immediate commander.

An elaborate analysis of Winston Churchill in 1953 is too long to quote; but in its mixture of sympathetic insight and icy common sense it is absolutely devastating. Ike could simply see no reason in the old hero's yearnings for an Anglo-American special relationship to settle the destinies of the world. Later, after the reader has probably decided that Eisenhower's overblown admiration for John Foster Dulles is one of his blind spots, we come across the following:

(24 January 1958) I sense a difference with Foster Dulles (in the approach to the Soviets). His is a lawyer's mind. He consistently adheres to a very logical explanation of these difficulties in which we find ourselves with the Soviets, and in doing so - with his lawyer's mind - he shows the steps and actions that are bad on their face, we seek to show that we are doing this decent and just thing. Of course we have got to have a concern about respect for fact and reiteration of official position, but we are likewise trying to "seek friends and influence people".

Therefore, I sometimes question the practice of becoming a sort of international prosecuting attorney. As this passage suggests, there is

very little comfort in this book for the present Republican administration. Eisenhower was a conservative of a type now nearly extinct. His Kansas attitudes that Iowa imposed on the young Herbert Hoover. No wonder that he had such a respect for Hoover and Hoover's ideas, which gave him an ill-furnished air even in 1952. He was deeply suspicious of the welfare state, thinking (this Army man, accustomed to the service from West Point to the Gulf) that it undermined the good American values of self-help and independence; he was positively reverential towards businessmen; he deplored the steady extension of the federal bureaucracy, and was profoundly committed to thrift in government and the balanced budget, as means to preserving a stable currency. He parted company with Hoover only over foreign affairs (1 March 1951). I am forced to believe he's getting senile. . . .) Hoover was an isolationist, but all Ike's professional training and experience had conditioned him to think that the United States must play a part of leadership in the world if its vital interests were to be protected, especially against the advance of Communism.

The Reagan administration parades its belief in most of these attitudes, but its actions belie it, especially in its readiness to shovel out money for military hardware. The last sentence of the United States has no illusion that this was the road to real security. In an updated memorandum, which Professor Ferrell tentatively assigns to December, 1956, he wrote:

During my term of office, unless there is some technical or political development that I do not foresee, or a marked inflationary trend in the economy (which I will battle to the death) - I will not approve any obligatory or expendable authorities for the Defense Department that exceed something on the order of \$38.5 billion. . . .

Fine words, of an all too familiar type; but Ike meant what he said and kept surprisingly close to his goal. In 1960, his last year in office, the Pentagon spent just under \$44 billion. Total federal outlays exceeded balanced federal revenues, at \$92 billion. These were the 60s.

nothing as he needed the white Southern bloc vote.

The way the letters have been chosen is interesting. Robert S. McElvaine has chosen from a sampling of 15,000 out of a public archive of 15,000,000 letters. He has written a brief introduction to the period and has arranged the letters according to the various concerns. The edition is meticulous and the presentation admirable. The printing is of high quality. Yet the very beauty and exactitude of the book take away from the onrush and illiteracy of the letters. It is as if a Utilitarian clerk were drafting a memorandum in corporate about the undesirability of feeding the material production contradicts the material production of the Great Hunger. The fine production contradicts the material production of the Great Hunger. The fine production contradicts the material production of the Great Hunger.

The letters are also a tribute to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt's style of government. The President's radio talks to the nation made millions of people feel that they had a personal relationship with him. He seemed to converse with them directly, so they wrote to him directly, believing that he personally would aid them. These letters show that the apparent accessibility of the White House did much to lessen radicalism. The people did not feel ignored or manipulated by it. They believed that, if only the truth of their problems were known, the Roosevelts would do something about them. They were particularly affected by Roosevelt's speech about the "Forgotten Man", and believed that they had merely to bring themselves to his attention "in order to be remembered. Letter after letter from different groups, from the aged, from mothers, children, blacks made claims to be considered as the "forgotten ones". And Roosevelt, knowing that the Democratic coalition depended on the votes of the minority groups which briefly cohered around him and his, gave each group of the forgotten some of his words, his help and his understanding. The letters from the South testify to fears of assault and destitution, were it to become known that a poor black had dared to write directly to the White House. "You can prevent all brute treatment of the Darkies here if you will," a correspondent wrote from Vicksburg. But in this case, Roosevelt could do

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Looking out for wholeness

Charles Tomlinson

ELIZABETH BISHOP

The Complete Poems 1927-1979
287pp. Chatto and Windus. £10.95.
0 7011 2694 9

English readers began to make the acquaintance of Elizabeth Bishop with the appearance, from Chatto and Windus, of her selected poems in 1956. The same publishers have now honoured their early commitment with this *Complete Poems*, which splendidly vindicates them. F. W. Bateson once described the author to me as "Marianne Moore and water". Reading these lucid, witty and sometimes sad poems, I wondered how often this sort of dismissal had slowed down the spread of her reputation here.

Marianne Moore, whom she first met in 1934, was clearly decisive for Elizabeth Bishop's work. Bishop did not, however, water down that stinging and humane tone, but learned from it in a way that words like "influence" do not greatly help us to understand. Behind Miss Moore was the prose of Ruskin. It suggested to her, perhaps, that if only Ruskin's wit could be rescued from his eloquence, the twentieth-century poet could write of nature free of the egotistical, sublime, Ruskinian wit? Took his pine trees - "such like the shadow of the one beside it - upright, fixed, spectral, as troops of ghosts standing on the walls of Hades, not knowing each other. . . . The rock itself looks bent and shattered beside them - fragile, weak, inconsistent, compared to their dark energy of delicate life, and monotony of enchanted pride - unnumbered, unconquerable." The shadow at the beginning of the passage, that fantasy of the ghosts, the pre-Lawrentian "dark energy of delicate life" all pull against the "unnumbered, unconquerable" of her collage poem "An Octopus" Moore shares away at all this with:

... the dark energy of delicate life, and monotony of enchanted pride - unnumbered, unconquerable. The shadow at the beginning of the passage, that fantasy of the ghosts, the pre-Lawrentian "dark energy of delicate life" all pull against the "unnumbered, unconquerable" of her collage poem "An Octopus" Moore shares away at all this with:

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Only gesture

Michael Hofmann

VEREEN M. BELL

Robert Lowell, Nihilist as Hero
215pp. Harvard University Press.
£14.
0 674 7585 6

In this study Vereen Bell limits herself to Lowell's original verse, ignoring his plays and translations; he makes few comparisons with contemporaries, and says nothing at all about stylistic influences. There is no contentious evaluation of Lowell's standing - neither in explicit claims, nor in the unbalanced praise of passing awards - and two other big topics, revisions and poetic development, are similarly left untouched. Instead, in his eight chapters, Bell considers Lowell's major collections, from *Lord Weary's Castle* to *Day by Day* (History and For Life and Heart). He is left out, as having been largely subsumed in complete and responsible statements of the details of chronology are also left out of account, as is the case with the country of each volume. This level of content occasionally causes Bell to read too much into his material: a line like "This open book . . . my open soul" is an exclamation, not the conclusion of a poetical hypothesis, something more gravely literal than that. Similarly, Lowell said in his address on receiving the National Book Award (one of very few extra-poetic items of evidence adduced by Bell): "When I

the dignified tall fits begin. . . . Black, associating with their shadows, a million Christmas trees stand waiting for Christmas. The water seems suspended above the rounded grey and blue-grey stones. . . .

I have seen it over and over, the same sea, slightly, indifferently swinging above the stones. . . .

This is like a darker, post-linguistic, version of the kind of writing one finds in the prose of Sarah Orne Jewett's little masterpiece, *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. Yet the suggestion of threat in it is something that masks Miss Bishop's evocation of northern latitudes and dying sea-side towns, of Maine, New Brunswick and Cape Breton, different from Jewett and also from the pastoral atmosphere of a similar setting in Moore's "The Steppe-Jack". There "the hero, the student, the steppe-jack, each in his way, is at home". For Bishop people are only provisionally at home. When she travels south (Nova Scotia and Brazil are her two extremes) she asks:

Is it lack of imagination what makes us to imagined places . . . ? Should we have stayed at home, wherever that may be?

Nearer home, at Cape Breton, the place is depopulating, there is an idiot, a dwarf dressmaker, a student who, unlike Moore's Ambrose, is a morose giant. Not that Bishop lays all this on with Faulkner's palette knife. But hovering over her northern sea-vistas and her Brazilian jungles there is a hint of the darkness about to fall, a margin of the sad and the inexplicable that refuses to be exorcized by her brave wit. At times the brilliant surface of her work reminds one of Hemingway, the Hemingway of *Big Two-Hearted River* (she, also, was an enthusiastic fisher). Style never becomes for her, as it did for him, a ritual of self-congratulation, though there are one or two Martian indulgences. Yet one senses that her objectivity is governed by enormous reticence, and her precision comes from an effort at self-control that refuses to be more explicit.

It is curious that *The Complete Poems* does not contain the long prose section in *The Village* from her third volume *Questions of Travel*. This can hardly be due to a policy of excluding the prose, for we have half a dozen uncollected prose pieces gathered together here. In *The Village* derives from her own childhood. Born in 1911 - the year of her father's death and her

mother's commitment to an asylum - she is brought up "in the village" in Nova Scotia. Here "in the middle of the view", we are told, "like one hand of a clock pointing straight up, is the steeple of the Presbyterian Church". A background of pain and alienation (the mother comes from the mental institution and disappears again) contrasts with a bright particularized foreground seen through the child's eyes and this, to some extent, shuts back the pain. The mother's scream is driven out by the clang with which Nate the blacksmith shapes a horseshoe:

Nate is shaping a horseshoe. Oh, beautiful pure sound! It turns everything else to silence.

And I had waterspouts. Oh, half a dozen at a time, for out, they'd come and go, advancing and retreating, on and on, dim lamplight in the hall, down in the kitchen, the dog tucked in her shawl.

What suddenly unites all the passengers, drawing them away from sleep, is the appearance of a mouse, another witness to those spaces. Unlike the buck that crashes through Robert Frost's poem "The Most of It" and leaves the poet to his own cosmic loneliness, the mouse unites poet and travellers inside the stoppab bus. They belong to a common universe along with the animal:

Taking her time, she looks the bus over, grand, otherworldly. Why, why do we feel (we all feel) this sweet sensation of joy?

"Curious creatures", says our quiet driver, rolling his r's. "Look at that, would you." Then he shifts gears. For a moment longer, by craning backward, the mouse can be seen on the moonlit macadam; then there's a dim smell of mouse, an acrid smell of gasoline.

This rich collection concludes with a series of translations of Latin American poems from both the Spanish and Portuguese. These are finely done, as one would expect from the translator of the Brazilian prose classic, *Uma Vida de Memórias*, published under the title of *The Diary of Helena Morley* in 1957. That, too, is an achievement of Bishop's that deserves to be more widely known over here. When, in the Introduction, she goes to look at Diamantina, the setting of the diary, one sees her *translating* the place into the terms of her own art: "In the cold clear air, the town itself, with its neatness, rockiness, and fine glitter, seems almost on the point of precipitation and crystallization." In the action of her poems there is also often a feeling of precipitation and crystallization. There is some darkness, certainly, and some humanity; but there are humour and luminosity, too, which can make of the cold clear air a bracing element, one in which the feeling of isolation lifts and the heart is undivided in its sympathies.

external to the self and consciousness, and also malevolently animated by the threatened subject's perception of it: either way it is beyond control.

It is against this background that Bell analyses the sometimes precarious sleekness in later Lowell. "The millennial" of the little never properly explained, but time and again Bell demonstrates Lowell's antilegalistic vision, his disabused intelligence and his gradually diminishing suspicion and mastery - they go together - of the external world. "The doubtful ambivalence", Bell writes of a poem in *Notebook*, "is that of an intellectual being considering his creatureliness. Bell is full of splendid critical insights, from his early definition of poetry as "moral, apologetic" to his identification of "a disquieting ur-reality" at the beginning of "Waiting in the Blue" and of "the voluptuous, almost tropical feeling" in "Soft Wood" (even though that poem is set in Maine), to the "bracing and beautiful" names and dates in one of Lizzie's letters in *The Dolphin*:

"Will you go with us to The Messiah, on December 17th, a Thursday, and eat at the Russian Tearoom afterward?"

In *Notebook*, as earlier, Lowell's art is to characterize [his] environment as both implacably autonomous,

her sense of isolation, her sexual inversion, perhaps - is checked and counterpoised by her steady outward gaze. Could a different poet have confronted the pain more directly and brought it to bear more tellingly on the scope of her "objective" style? Perhaps. Yet there is in her best work a courageous reaching away from the luxuries of self-enclosure and towards the life that is going on around her, or the life that is absent, as in "Crucifixion in England" where the returned castaway reflects:

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He Was Singin' This Song

by Jim Bob Tinsley

(winner of the Cowboy Hall of Fame Western Heritage Award for Best Book, 1979)

"He Was Singin' This Song" contains the words and music to 48 songs, many of which people in this area have known more or less since childhood. If you have forgotten all the verses to "The Strawberry Roan", "Rye Whiskey", "I've Got No Use for the Women", or a dozen others, they are all here for your enjoyment.

The Billings (Montana) Gazette
"What makes Tinsley's book something special is the combination of musical and historical details plus photographs and illustrations (which add much flavor to the word pictures painted by the narratives)."

The Roundup: Magazine of the Western Writers of America

"One of the most evocative of the photos shows a cowboy in his slicker and sombrero shaking a slight header shaken for his round. The scene is appointed by the hat, gumbel, and spurs of the sleeping rider. Fanny of western lore will sat up such details. The night rider presumably has his boots on."

The Bloomsbury Review
"A magnificent book, a bargain for anyone who cares about cowboys, the West or folk music."

Dallas Times Herald

1982, 288 pp., \$2.12 Over 200 illus., music
ISBN 0-8130-0043-X
A University of Central Florida Book
UNIVERSITY PARKWAY OF FLORIDA
15 NW 17th St., Gainesville, FL 32609

Dear Mr President

Andrew Sinclair

ROBERT S. McELVAINE (Editor)

Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the "Forgotten Man"
251pp. University of North Carolina Press. £17.25 (paperback, £6.75).
0 8078 4099 8

The editor of *Down and Out in the Great Depression*, a small sampling of letters written mainly to Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt, confesses to the assumption that ordinary people are not merely acted upon by history: they are also actors, and to an extent, playwrights, producers and directors as well. He believes that the down-and-out of the 1930s were mostly, not passive victims they may have been, but they were not yet out. But his selection of letters does not support his assumption. The forgotten men, believed that they were not doing, by sinister forces. The letters show that many of them believed in the conspiracy theories that Richard Holsinger finds to be at the grassroots of American politics.

Those who wrote to the President of the United States and to his wife tended to absolve them of all blame and to revere them as the father and godfather of the nation. The habitual victims of economic collapse and prolonged depression the had time were thought to be the result of machinations on Wall Street and by the "guilty gang" of the Money Trust - to

be called Morgan or Dupont or Rockefeller were to be Satan. "The big bugs horde their money away", one wrote. "The Depression seemed to be a Big Capitalist conspiracy which would benefit a Communist conspiracy; both of them subversive of established American values. One correspondent in particular pointed out that the fear of the Communist conspiracy actually helped the Big Capitalist one."

The third seagoat was Washington and the bureaucracy. Roosevelt's three and four-lettered welfare organizations, from the CWA and the WPA to the HOLC and the FERA were administered by people who were often said to care less for the suffering than for their own jobs. Many letters complain of brutal or indifferent or corrupt officials. "As sure as you live, this money that's being put out for the poor is not put where it should be. A nation of beggars and cowards is being created, above which the Roosevelt's rose supreme. The President and the First Lady could do no wrong; only their underlings were to blame."

Accusations were levelled at the unemployed themselves: "A system of public works and welfare payments was often considered an American and selfish, one gigantic racket" calling itself the New Deal. "A poor woman from South Arkansas wrote to say that no one wanted to work; everyone was fighting and struggling to get on relief. Yet people did not want relief and certainly not the Poor Farm. 'What do you want?' another correspondent wrote. 'Is a chance to make an honest living like what we're asked?'"

The Reds of various hues were, indeed, also blamed, not so much for

causing the Depression as for organizing themselves to take advantage of it, even in Washington. Capitalist conspiracy which would benefit a Communist conspiracy; both of them subversive of established American values. One correspondent in particular pointed out that the fear of the Communist conspiracy actually helped the Big Capitalist one."

So when we unemployed ask for bread - they don't even say give us cake - but they give us gas - the club - the gun, and turn water on us. . . . They just yell Red and make out that poor people haven't enough food to give them the life to be even pink. The down-and-out felt manipulated by groups other than their own: the Great Depression was not their fault, but the fault of someone else. "The people need to get together, a poor man," said one, "and feed a body. There is much hatred towards one another."

But above hatred were the Roosevelts, trying to use personal influence and federal power to change bad times into good times. In the eight years of depression, before the Second World War brought happy days of prosperity "here again", Roosevelt's use of welfare and relief, and especially, his establishment of old-age pensions, did more to alter the "ordinary responsibilities" than in any other period in American history. These letters are a moving testimony to this process. They bear witness to the change of feeling which demanded that the government should act to feed millions, pay rents, make jobs, put

clothes on the people's backs. Federal intervention was in be right and rugged American individualism became merely the shillbooth of the rich against the poor.

The letters are also a tribute to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt's style of government. The President's radio talks to the nation made millions of people feel that they had a personal relationship with him. He seemed to converse with them directly, so they wrote to him directly, believing that he personally would aid them.

These letters show that the apparent accessibility of the White House did much to lessen radicalism. The people did not feel ignored or manipulated by it. They believed that, if only the truth of their problems were known, the Roosevelts would do something about them. They were particularly affected by Roosevelt's speech about the "Forgotten Man", and believed that they had merely to bring themselves to his attention "in order to be remembered. Letter after letter from different groups, from the aged, from mothers, children, blacks made claims to be considered as the "forgotten ones". And Roosevelt, knowing that the Democratic coalition depended on the votes of the minority groups which briefly cohered around him and his, gave each group of the forgotten some of his words, his help and his understanding. The letters from the South testify to fears of assault and destitution, were it to become known that a poor black had dared to write directly to the White House. "You can prevent all brute treatment of the Darkies here if you will," a correspondent wrote from Vicksburg. But in this case, Roosevelt could do

nothing as he needed the white Southern bloc vote. The way the letters have been chosen is interesting. Robert S. McElvaine has chosen from a sampling of 15,000 out of a public archive of 15,000,000 letters. He has written a brief introduction to the period and has arranged the letters according to the various concerns. The edition is meticulous and the presentation admirable. The printing is of high quality. Yet the very beauty and exactitude of the book take away from the onrush and illiteracy of the letters. It is as if a Utilitarian clerk were drafting a memorandum in corporate about the undesirability of feeding the material production contradicts the material production of the Great Hunger. The fine production contradicts the material production of the Great Hunger. The fine production contradicts the material production of the Great Hunger.

Wolfing it down

John Stokes

LINDA BLANDFORD

America on Five Vellum a Day
224pp. Methuen. £7.95.
0 413 51840 X

ROY BLOUNT

One Fell Soup: Or I'm Just a Bug on the
Windshield of Life
278pp. Methuen. £8.50.
0 413 52620 E

"But enough about me, let's talk about you... tell me, how do you feel about me?" This New York joke, which Linda Blandford feels is wearing thin, owes a good deal to Tom Wolfe, progenitor of "The Me Decade". So, it must be said, do Blandford's own reports in the *Guardian*, now collected as *America on Five Vellum a Day*. A tendency to see Manhattan through Wolfe's eyes shows in her weakness for brand-name identification. This can be a challenge to her British readers. Londoners might fathom the "guy young men in their Colvins", those who rifle through *New Yorker* ads should be able to crack the "Ralph Lauren-odorized, Bill Blass-bedded studio dwellers", but parents capable of deciphering the precise status of children in "muted Osh Kosh overalls" who possess a "genuine, miniature, Cosco potty with authentic working loop seat" deserve to go straight to the top of the Manhattan upper-middle class.

Nothing is stranger to the British—exceeding even the brutalities of climate and language—than New York's homage to food. Blandford lists the menu for the 6 am Breakfast Special at the Greek place on West 86th, the constituents of Louisa Lichman's Hungarian strudel (apple, cheese, cherry, nut, poppyseed and cabbage), pays tribute to Bernie Katz's chocolate éclairs, Herb Grossinger's *rigolanci*, Magda Honti's caramel cake and, the prodigious desserts at Panarella's. It's easier for Americans to explain us according to our diet (a resigned phlegm brought on by the

phenomenological disorder of tepid beer, cold toast, soft chips and thin meat) than it is for us to decode their much more elaborate gastronomic language. Smart New York consumes its origins and devours its dreams. "Manhattan's national dish," writes Blandford, is the croissant, redolent of sun-dappled attic rooms in Paris, loaves and romance. A fantasy, of course, but then the croissant is "a Me food—to each her own, nothing to share, and no one else to demand the best bit". Likewise, for those whose egos need no enlarging, merely to rinse, Perrier water has replaced the Martini, visually indistinguishable but vitamin-packed. If New York tells you that you should be whatever you want to be, then it follows that what you want to be, you eat.

Thankfully, one's worries that Blandford's Manhattan might be an island invented by Wolfe, laid out like a good food guide, are quickly dispelled by her finely braided *Guardian* conscience. Her first social encounter is a meeting of her neighbours on the Upper West Side: "where the liberals live". Its purpose is



Carl Solomon and Gregory Corso at the Kerouac Conference on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of *On the Road*.

to protest against the threatened invasion by a post psychiatric socialization facility for formerly hospitalized psychotics. The "liberals" are worried about their property values, and Blandford is rightly repelled. Though she allows herself to observe that "in a city in which the illusion of its advertising is mistaken for its reality, those who muddle along in the unkempt and ordinary way know themselves to be failures", she repeatedly discovers, in her forays around the city, that this isn't necessarily so. The arrogant joggers in Central Park may "interpret the survival of the fittest for too literally", but then there's transportation engineer Irwin Yetzen, whose performance in the Meritthon brought him back from terminal depression. Valerie, the Fishlady once chained to the deep freeze by riders, throws a neighbourhood party.

"There is a lot more here than fish," she says. There are for instance the members of the New York City Housing Authority Orchestra, mostly black or Hispanic, who play Tchaikovsky in the projects as a gesture of solidarity with their fellow victims of Great legs, cherry lips, and deltas aglow.

Camp follower

James Campbell

JOYCE JOHNSON

Minor Characters
262pp. Collins Harvill. £7.95.
0 00 272511 E

Joyce Johnson climbed into bed one night in 1957 with a likeable, immature, heavy-drinking hobo, and woke up with a celebrity. What happened in between was the publication in the *New York Times* of a review of *On the Road*, the first novel by Jack Kerouac (as opposed to "John", who had published one six years earlier). Agents and reporters started knocking on his door at breakfast, and by lunchtime it was, in a sense, all over: Jack was smashed and answering questions, with the drunken incoherence which was to become a trade mark, about the meaning of "beat" and the significance of "the road".

"What was it really like, Jack? When did you first become aware of this generation? And how many people are involved in it? Is America going to go Beat? Are you telling us now to turn our backs on our families and look for kicks?"

"Hey," Jack said. "Have some champagne."

They were investigating the birth of the Beat Generation, unaware that it was, for literary purposes at least, already dead. For Jack, there were to be few more kicks and no more "road"—aeroplanes only, from now on—until he died in front of the television set, under his mother's hawkish eye, in 1969. He had continued to write, but most of the books which followed *On the Road* were written before that morning's impromptu publicist party.

While the first glasses were being filled, "Joyce", Kerouac's occasional girlfriend, the who who always understood and always forgave, was in the kitchen making coffee and having doubts about her own role in the coming drama of the Beat Generation. She was right, of course, as past experience told her. It was a boy's game: Kerouac and Cassidy, Ginsberg and Orlovsky, Burroughs and his Tanglewood boys... The myth of the freedom-seeking hero and his outcast sidekick is one of the most persistent in American fiction, from Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking and Chingachook, to Huck Finn and Jim, right up to the Lone Ranger and Tonto. By living it as well as writing it, Kerouac and his friends became a legend.

Minor Characters is an attempt to tell the story from the side of the girl who makes the coffee and stays at home when the boys ride the range. Joyce Johnson cites, with a laconic bitterness, recent efforts by the novelist John Clellon Holmes to match the male characters in his novel, *Go*, with their originals, while admitting that the "centrally young women were mere amalgams. Mr Johnson's purpose is to reveal the centre of a least one of them.

And breasts you could nibble and massage them to grow... And through the whole business I kept saying, "Let's all very nice, but can someone be cock?"

Eloquent of the table, Blount tells dirty everywhere else. Remembering Mailer's refusal to write for the *New Yorker* because they wouldn't let him use the word "shit", Blount, whose outlets include not only that reformed magazine but *Eastern Airlines Pastimes*, *Organic Gardening* and a dozen others, uses it a good deal, bringing a new literalness to pornography. Not to be outdone by Wolfe, who once devoted an essay to the Manhattan meanings of what he here knows as "le mot Craig Raine", Blount reflects at length on what Hemingway (strangely, decorously) dubbed "cojones". It's a clever piece, "gross" in the current campus mode, yet crude. But despite further signs of repressed sensibility in his comments on Woody Allen and Steve Martin, and some unexpectedly pedantic points about newspaper style manuals, Blount soon gets back to the café, grite and turnip greens. When the choco-chips are down, he's all mouth.

Per there is time enough
For the light in which the truth shall be voided,
The broad, untidy light of day
That adds no jot
Yet miraculously subtracts all away.

Three poems by John Ashbery

Background Music

I like wallpaper to have a white background
With small, cursive flowers (preferably blue)
Swarming from floor to ceiling.
I like small patterns to cover the large areas,
Like pages of exclamation marks.

I like the furniture to be dark and discrete lumps
Here and there in the unpublishable gloom
Of rooms which may be suddenly enlight
In the fullness of time. Some gracious,
Open-armed purgatory, in which sitters
Sit, until the clemor
Of the emusant bell summon them to breakfasts,
To classrooms where attendance is kept.

Per there is time enough
For the light in which the truth shall be voided,
The broad, untidy light of day
That adds no jot
Yet miraculously subtracts all away.

When their music is heard there are those
Who having heard it, clap, and those
Who have not heard it and who clap again
Aed again, for hardest drive
Inures success in performances just past:
A sequential doing dancier with knowing.
The applause breaks loose like bunting
Borne on gentle draughts upward, plagues to skim
The tops of the near buildings whose height
Is limited by law.
Far ones who like clouds, fields,
And the sublime music of Stenhemmar,
Ordinary faded daylight is not enough.
A weighted backdrop streaked with the business of day
Plummet and stops, its aftermath a kind of awe
Handed over by the weather from the kind of day it was.

Think of all the patterns that might have been—
Just one view of one brook, for instance—and how
The jewelled scaffolding in the walls
Of the attic-bedroom holds them all at bay
With the night sky; how it basks gracefully
The weight of billions of light-years at each pressure point.
So that the small occurrences can follow the stupor
Paths of its development to the point just beyond it.
Aod with flair,
Despite predictions of failure.

As playing was a project, it now comes easily
To address strictures of the day to the tones
Of purest expectancy within the blood;
To warn of ganaralooes still to come,
Of transparent fists and ploughshares sheken
And a fat ion
Cushioned behind a hill in late August
To and the rubus.

Look, it's bleeding now.

Trefoil

Imagine some tinkling curiosity from the years back—
The fashions aren't old enough yet to look out of fashion.
It is a perfect picture of windows, with trees
Of two minds half-caught in their buzz and luster,
The froth of everyone's ideas as personal and skinny as ever.

The windows taught us one thing: a great, square grief
Not alleviated or distracted by anything, since the pattern
Must establish itself before it can grow old, cannot weather nicely
Keeping a notion of squirrels and peacocks to punctuate
Chapters of fine print as they are ground down, growing ever finer
To assume the strict title of dust someday. No, there is no room now
For oceans, blizzards: only night, with fingers of steel
Pressing the lost lid, searching forever unquietly the mechanism
To unclasp all this into warbled sunlight, the day
The gunt parson comes to ask for your hand. Nothing is flying,
Sinking: it is as though the resistance of all things
To the earth were so much casual embroidery, years
In the making, barely glimpsed at the appointed time.

Through it all a stiffness persists
Of someone who had changed her mind, moved by your arguments
And waiting till the last possible moment to confess it,
To let you know you were wanted, even a lot, more than you could
Imagine. But all that is, as they say, another story.

Thank You for not Cooperating

Down in the street there are ice-cream parlors to go to
And the pavement is a nice, bluish slate-gray. People laugh a lot.
Here you can see the stars. Two lovers are singing
Separately, from the same rooftop: "Leave your change behind,
Leave your clothes, and go. It is time now.
It was time before too, but now it is really time.
You will never have enjoyed storms so much.
As on these hot sticky evenings that are more like August
Than September. Stay. A fake wind wills you to go
And out there on the stormy river witness buses bound for Connecticut,
And tree-business, and all that we think about when we stop thinking.
The weather is perfect, the season unclear. Weep for your going
But also expect to meet me in the near future, when I shall disclose
My future adventures and what you shall continue to think of me."

The wind dropped, and the lovers
Sang no more, communicating each to each in the tedium
Of self-expression, and the shore curled up and became liquid
And so the celebrated lament began. And how shall we, people
All unused to each other and to our own business, explain
It to the shore if it is given to us
To circulate there "in the near future" the way of our coming
And why we were never here before? The counter-proposals
Of the ghost-stranger impede our construing of ourselves as
Person-objects, the ones we know would get here
Somehow, but we can remember as easily as the day we were born
The maggots we passed on the way and how the day died
And the night too on hearing us, though we spoke only our childish
Ideas and never tried to impress anybody even when somewhat older.

Argument by example

Michael Mason

ERIC WARNER and GRAHAM HUGHES (Editors)

Strangeness and Beauty: An Anthology of Aesthetic Criticism 1840-1910

Volume One: Ruskin to Swinburne. 285pp.

0 521 23895 1
Volume Two: Pater to Symonds. 303pp.

0 521 23896 X
Cambridge University Press. Each volume £25 (paperback, £7.95).

It is a familiar fact that there are no total revolutions in artistic and literary culture. Revolutions always involve an element of continuity at some level, even if it is only at the rhetorical level, because they always take the form of a more or less extreme twist imparted to something traditional. Hence it is possible, if you are obstinate enough, to argue away any particular revolution. The question for the non-obstinate must be: at what level of continuity is it appropriate to stipulate the innovations brought in by a new wave of artists and critics, and start resisting claims made for their originality? The editors of this two-volume anthology believe that some resistance of this sort is needed in the assessment of English culture at the end of the last century. Their selection of literary and art criticism and theory from 1831 onwards has a polemical intent which is set out in the introduction and commentary. It is thus an unusual sort of anthology: an anthology *à l'usage*. Its drift is not, however, the one stated on the jacket: the editors wish to repudiate the view . . . that the explosion in the arts in the first decades of the twentieth century represents a clear and decisive break with the aesthetic speculation and practice of the previous century.

Perhaps the Cambridge University Press thinks that this line of argument would have been more interesting than the one the editors actually pursue: that continuity exceeds discontinuity in the transition from early Victorian to late Victorian aesthetic culture. Among the chief bridging or linking ideas are the following: "the autonomy of art within its own realm; the authority of the senses; the working of poetry through the image and through music."

So the scope of this collection is

approximately that of a well-known study (which had the more orthodox form of a continuous literary-critical discussion) by one of the editors, Graham Hughes's *The Last Romantics*. But it ranges wider and claims more than the earlier book did. Professor Hughes describes in *The Last Romantics* how, to him, Yeats's circle in the 1890s "seemed to owe almost everything to Pater and the pre-Raphaelites, and from them I was inevitably led back to Ruskin. At this point I came to a stop." Now, with the help of Eric Warner, he doesn't come to a stop at Ruskin any longer. Hallam's 1831 essay "On Some of the Characteristics of Modern Poetry" is here, along with Poe and Gautier. In the introduction it is claimed that

the sort of intense aesthetic contemplation which Ruskin, Pater, and Whistler were to champion had been enshrined long before in such great romantic poems as Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn".

This broken, disparate group of writers is not what Hughes might have been expected to notice once he saw past Ruskin. He and Mr Warner write that Ruskin was "one of the first" who "attacked the destruction of spiritual values in the burgeoning materialism of his day", a theme transmitted to Pater and his school. But such attacks were a great commonplace of early Victorian culture. Perhaps "one of the first" is a perfunctory nod towards such un-Pateresque figures as Carlyle and Dickens.

Even in the mid-Victorian period when a line of descent of "aesthetic" ideas can be more continuously traced, it is an awkward project making out that this should eclipse the many differences that separate, for example, Rossetti, Morris and Swinburne. The editors resort rather frequently to capacious descriptions like "developments and transformations" in order to forge their links, and they often have to pitch the acknowledged level of "transformation" so high that these links are virtually emptied of significance. William Morris and early Pre-Raphaelitism, in particular, press the idea of "aesthetic criticism" to an extreme point of comprehensiveness. The head-note on Morris, as a matter of fact, constitutes a satisfying little essay on him, and throughout the collection the editors exhibit knowledge, affection and sensitivity where their chosen texts are concerned — which makes the framework of "aesthetic criticism" even more

dispensable as a rationale for the collection.

This is not, however, to disparage the novel concept of this anthology as a general procedure for cultural-historical argument. Any such argument will be a mixture of statements and evidence; this collection may be seen as simply altering the conventional balance between the two, and doing so, moreover, in the direction of intellectual fairness: since the larger body of examples should enable the uninformed reader to assess the justice of the editors' argument better. Or this might have been the result. The fact is that the configuration of Victorian culture makes it quite easy to give a misleading picture despite a copious display of materials. To start with, one may simply omit certain figures. The absence of Carlyle has been noted; Arnold is not included either (even though the first slightly strained claims of "development and transformation" from this critic to *fin de siècle* values are offered by Pater and Wilde themselves). The prolixity of some writers is a help. A great diversity of

opinions may be extracted from Ruskin, and it is noticeable in this collection that breaks and contradictions in the editors' lineage of aesthetic critics show up when there is less material for them to draw on. Whistler, for example, comes across clearly in his "The Ten O'Clock Lecture" as the despiser of Ruskin and Morris (indeed this splendid speech is conceived in antagonism to the latter: "There never was an artistic period. There never was an Art-Inventing nation"). The cultural reminiscences by Yeats printed in this anthology alone suffice to make its editorial argument seem extremely simplified. Yeats had to keep his admiration for Hallam and the Pre-Raphaelites, though they were united in approving of Whistler and disliking Swinburne and Tennyson.

Finally, my selection of Victorian critical writing will tend to assist an "aesthetic" account of the ideas that prevailed. There is a bias in the mere nature of the discourse (in the sense that "aesthetic criticism" is something of a tautology; an entirely unaesthetic

criticism is not imaginable). And this period the writers on the aesthetic side were conspicuously articulate. The editors say that

the nineteenth century was a particularly rich era of aesthetic speculation . . . Wordsworth and Coleridge set the tone . . . but public lectures and long Prefaces to joint volumes of poetry finally established the role of the critic as critical commentator on the arts.

This is thoroughly misleading. The figures in this anthology, in terms of space devoted to them, are Ruskin and Pater, neither of them important artists. Conversely, the most important poets of the Victorian era, Tennyson and Browning, were exceptionally reticent about their art. Even if the theme of this anthology is correct, and *fin de siècle* ideas of the arts had a longer, broader history in nineteenth-century England than is usually recognized, a doubt about its significance would still survive: because this tradition was not, on the whole, associated with significant creative endeavour in its day.

Imports of culture

Jennifer Uglow

JOHN J. CONLON

Walter Pater and the French Tradition

175pp. Associated University Presses. £12.95.

0 8387 5016 8

A glance at the densely packed, highly allusive pages of John J. Conlon's book helps to explain why no comprehensive study of Pater's relationship to French thought and literature has previously appeared in the new wave of Pater studies of the past decade. Critics may have been intimidated partly by the extent and diversity of his interests: "Of the seventy-five prose works . . . twenty deal primarily with French literature and civilisation", while the remainder "with very few exceptions, contain allusions to French culture, French words, phrases and proper names". The difficulty is that in a short book, arranged chronologically like this present study, many references can receive only the most cursory mention,

while more lengthy treatments, like the analysis of Michelet's influence, or the comparison of Arnold and Pater as interpreters of French culture, are cut short by the need to hurry on to the next stage of Pater's development. One feels like a harassed tourist being marched past ten landmarks in a day, at each of which one could happily spend a month.

The critical problem is further intensified by the fact that "influences" in Pater's prose are notoriously various, cunningly interwoven and often distorted or even misquoted to form a peculiarly Paterian synthesis, an effect well evoked in Billie Andrew Inman's article on "The Intellectual Context of 'Walter Pater's Conclusion'". And so, beneath the surface of Pater's text, the muses hum: Goethe, Renan; Fichte, Hume, Spencer, Tyndall; Hegel, Aristippus, Plato; Morris, Baudelaire. To extract the French tradition alone may be not only difficult, but also misleading.

Conlon approaches his daunting task with boldness and sensitivity. His interest is threefold: in the French influence on Pater's aesthetic theory and critical method; in his imaginative response to a wider body of French literature and his sense of relation to English culture; and in his role as a publicist for contemporary French writing. The explication of Pater's intellectual debt to French predecessors in both his criticism and his fiction, is the clearest and most informative strand. The overall approach is exemplified by the lucid, succinct first chapter which demonstrates the eclectic method by which Pater moved gradually towards a coherent critical position in the essays written between 1868 and 1872, taking what interested him from his reading of a range of authors. From Renan, among other suggestions, he took the idea of "the work as surface . . . a myriad of objective data for the beholder's contemplation and active intellectual stimulation"; racing to a Talpé's dictum of "l'art, moment et milieu", he turned to Sainte-Beuve, and Roger D. Land offers some revealing comments on "genre" and "fiction" in *Little Dorrit*, though he seems a bit obtuse on the novel's technique when he complains of Dickens's "clumsily intruding into the narrative" in his own voice. Robert Carr's discussion of the dramatized narrator of *Little Dorrit* in his book *The Dickens Tradition* ought to have put a stop to complaints of this kind.

The "Novel on Blue Paper," however, is the treat and discovery of this volume. As Penelope Fitzgerald points out, Morris's time-scheme is impossible. . . his logic requires that Morris writing in 1872 should in due course describe his heroes' adventures in the 1890s. "News from Nowhere" indeed — but a bit of ingenuity could rescue it. Perhaps somebody will do a

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both to Romanticism". This loose Romantic tradition embraced the bizarre, irrational elements, the "strength" and "curiosity" which Pater always opposes to classical "sweetness" and "the desire for beauty". It is flexible enough to stretch from Joachim du Bellay to Michelet, from a medieval *chanson* to *Le Misérable*, reaching its "decadence" in the naturalism of Zola. There is surely, though, a second French tradition, that of independent enquiry in matters of faith, which Pater took from Abelard, to Montaigne's scepticism and Pascal's Jansenism and to minor contemporary writers like Aniel, Feuilleil and Lemaitre. In his fiction these two traditions are linked in the questing character, threatened by an oppressive "culture of emul", and led on not by faith, but, as many critics have noted, merely by hope — "the Great Possibility". Conlon's particular interest in the "Romantic" tradition gives his comments on the fiction a refreshingly individual feel. His five pages on Marjot, for instance, pass rapidly from a view of him as "a disciple of the second century", to a simile of the second century, to a forerunner of the existentialist and hero who stands "in the shadow of the characters of Saint-Exupéry, Camus, even the caricature of Ingeborg and Beckwith". The reading of *Ingeborg Beckwith* is similarly provocative, emphasizing the portrayal of destructive egotism and passion. This interpretation does justice to the energy but not the subtlety of this short fiction, and suffers from a weakness which menaces the whole book, namely an over-estimation of the force of his pole attraction to both sides of his pole: oppositions between romanticism and classicism, materialism and idealism, movement and stillness, Dionysus and Apollo.

The least satisfactory aspect of this interesting study is the estimation of Pater's influence as a polestar of French culture. The crucial importance of his work is reiterated rather than demonstrated; the reception of French literature in late Victorian England is described in a haphazard manner, and the definition of the "Paterian" resistance is limited to a review of Pater's review of Fabre in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1869. Pater's influence on the French culture of his time is not really explored, and even his own ambivalent attitude to Victorian poetry are treated solely in terms of temperament rather than critical tenets.

Walter Pater and the French Tradition is useful, stimulating, and closely textured criticism. But it contains a better study of the French influence on Pater, which requires a detailed reading of particular texts, than of Pater as a "French influence" on his time, which requires charting of movements of taste.

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JEAN STAROBINSKI

Montaigne en mouvement
378pp. Paris: Gallimard. 125fr.
2 07 022479 1

MICHEL CHAILLOU

Domestique chez Montaigne
277pp. Paris: Gallimard. 85fr.
2 07 023775 3

"He looked upon the self with the eyes of the non-self . . . the 'Essais' are the embodied process of that achievement." Montaigne touches his greatest heights in passages . . . where he surveys his own activity as the writer of the 'Essais'. . . An attempt to apply the Lacanian notion of the mirror-phase to Montaigne? A structuralist finding reflexivity wherever he looks? No, only Middleton Murry celebrating the 400th anniversary of Montaigne's birth in 1933 (see "Fifty years on", TLS, March 18). Yet the fact that such features have regularly struck readers of the *Essais* as central shows that it is not by some strange perversion of the modern critical mind that Montaigne has become so fashionable in recent years. Certain of the issues one associates with Continental criticism and its Anglo-Saxon by-products are unquestionably already there in Montaigne (the self-consciousness of the writer, the provisional status of his topics, the richness of the interplay between the *Essais* and other texts, the merging of the themes of writing with themes of nature, death, sickness, sex), although shaped by a different historical context and phrased in a very different language. At the same time, a clearer view is now emerging of the problems which have to be solved before a proper critical edition of the *Essais* is established, while a better understanding of the use Montaigne made of the varieties of discourse available to him is making it possible to grasp the nature of the extraordinary series of historical accidents that composed the *Essais*.

When the clans gather to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Montaigne's death in 1992, the moment may well have come to bring together these insights in a new synthesis on the scale of Pierre Villey's *Sources et Évolution*. Meanwhile, Jean Starobinski's admirable *Montaigne en mouvement* joins the handful of books on Montaigne (Friedrich, Tillyard, Fichte, Sayce) which give an intelligent general account of the *Essais*, and makes it superfluous for the non-specialist reader to spend much time on the daunting number of recent books and articles which offer a more partial view.

Although *Montaigne en mouvement* is a thoroughly coherent and well-integrated book, several of its chapters are modified versions of articles which have been appearing over a period of more than twenty years and have already proved seminal in their own right. It was thus conceived at much the same time as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Transparence de l'obstacle*, to which it indeed is a kind of sibling: Rousseau and Montaigne, despite some obvious differences, are linked "by" their meditations on the self and its relation with others, on the opposition between nature and "art" or culture, on education, solitude, freedom, and happiness, and, of course, by the fact that Rousseau knew the *Essais* intimately. Starobinski is concerned with discovering the principles which underlie the apparent contradictions and inconsistencies of each writer's imagination; he does not attempt a systematic comparative analysis, but often explicitly nourishes his own understanding of Rousseau, and the two books ought really to be read jointly as an exercise in reciprocal elucidation.

The principle which Starobinski grasps is a variety of them: a fundamental movement of Montaigne's thought, which is a dialectical one. He begins with the philosophical, theological, commonplace of the "falsely created creature" (this is a topoi, denouncing lies, hypocrisy and human artifice of all kinds and thus, it would seem, presupposing the possibility of attaining to the opposite term (truth, nature, essence). But in a second phase — and one should stress that these phases are presented as being logically, not chronologically, sequential — Montaigne perceives that "nous n'avons aucune communication à l'extérieur", that we are irremediably contaminated by appearance, that our desire for an inward truth that would make us wholly independent of others is always thwarted by the necessity of living in a world of political, social and personal relations. The third phase is that of "la relation maltrisée" (Starobinski's phrase): it is precisely the conscious acceptance of the play of appearances, the perception that there is no escape into a world of essence, which holds the contamination in check and allows the individual to achieve an intellectual and moral purchase on experience.

Stated baldly in this way, the principle may seem both schematic and banal. But any reduction of the *Essais* to a single quasi-philosophical structure will run that risk: Montaigne himself was acutely aware both of his tendency to fall into the commonplace and of his apparently gratuitous and futile attempt to escape it (this is indeed another way of restating the principle itself). In practice, the fineness with which Starobinski demonstrates the operation of this characteristic movement in relation to the themes of friendship, death, personal independence, the body, love, self-awareness and public life (a chapter on each) wholly vindicates the enterprise. The dialectic never appears in an aridly schematic form; its terms constantly shift according to the pressures and constraints of Montaigne's imagination. For example, the order of the first two phases may be inverted: in a particularly striking section of his third chapter, Starobinski points to Montaigne's own division of his life into three phases, the first being a state of individual consciousness and self-consciousness inevitably distracts attention from the character of the *Essais* as a polyphonic cross-section of contemporary texts and voices (Burke, with his no-nonsense history of ideas, journey to Italy is the paradigm for the third phase). With a hint of irony, Starobinski suggests that this tripartite division of Montaigne's life may be more appropriate than the traditional "stoic-sceptic-epicurean" schema. Every chapter has such insights: this is one of those rare critical studies that one genuinely wants to read from beginning to end.

It will already be clear that, in its method, *Montaigne en mouvement* represents a late flowering of the Genevan school of literary criticism. The theme of the book, the analysis of the recurrent configurations of a writer's imagination, the explicit view of what is fundamentally a phenomenological frame of reference, characterize not only Starobinski's earlier works but also those of his colleagues (notably Jean Rousset) and of Georges Poulet; to this he has added his own distinctive interest in psychology and medicine. For the English reader, his style will appear as distinctly "Continental", by contrast, for example, with Peter Burke's succinct and pragmatic account of Montaigne's ideas in the *Past Masters* series. Those who have begun to assume that the Genevan manner is becoming outmoded, having been overtaken first by structuralism, may even wonder whether Starobinski's *four de force* in this instance is not surreptitiously indebted to these latter developments. On the one hand, Barthes is mentioned very briefly in the final chapter as one of a series of modern thinkers dealing with problems already central to the *Essais*, while Derrida (unless I've missed a reference somewhere) is totally absent. On the other, questions such as the identity-difference crux, the undermining of the opposition between appearance and essence, and the writer's exploitation of discourses which he claims to reject, are nowadays considered as very much the province of Derrida and his followers. Where, then, does Starobinski stand?

Part of the answer is that such questions had already been raised in his book on Rousseau, to which Derrida's own reading of Rousseau is clearly indebted: Derrida has at the most enabled Starobinski to develop and consolidate his own topics and his own brand of critical reflection. Starobinski is aware of the plurality and fragmentation endemic in Montaigne's writing, of the instability of the structures of thought it sketches out, but in the end he remains attached to the uneven notion of a coherent consciousness within which all the shifts and tensions and apparent paradoxes are meaningfully contained. Unlike Derrida's style, Starobinski's is always elegant and eloquent; accidents, lapses, cracks, incoherences may figure sometimes as its themes but are never voluntarily allowed to undermine the critic's own discourse. And the third phase in the dialectic, although no doubt perceived as a trajectory rather than a fixed state, becomes the grounding in Starobinski's book for an intellectual and moral achievement, rather than (for example) a detour designed to disguise the friction between two incompatible modes of discourse.

Whether or not one wishes that Starobinski had leap-frogged *De la grammatologie* will be a matter of personal preference. But the personal approach has certain intrinsic limitations. If one is interested in the historical dimension of the *Essais*, Starobinski knows the sixteenth century well; he is aware of the extent to which historical change operates at the linguistic level (he comments, for example, on the rare use of the future tense in the *Essais*, associating it with a use of the word *histoire* which excludes connotations of process, progress, futurity); and there is a marvelous chapter — perhaps the most original in the book — on Montaigne's simultaneous suspicion of and dependence on the medical language of his day. But the priority given to individual consciousness and self-consciousness inevitably distracts attention from the character of the *Essais* as a polyphonic cross-section of contemporary texts and voices (Burke, with his no-nonsense history of ideas, journey to Italy is the paradigm for the third phase). With a hint of irony, Starobinski suggests that this tripartite division of Montaigne's life may be more appropriate than the traditional "stoic-sceptic-epicurean" schema. Every chapter has such insights: this is one of those rare critical studies that one genuinely wants to read from beginning to end.

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Complexities of the moi

Terence Cave

manoeuvres Montaigne performs in the "Apologie" ought not to be explained away as bad faith or intellectual incoherence on his part: they indicate, as graphically as his dismissal of Copernicus or his lack of faith in experimental scientific method, the constraints of late sixteenth-century intellectual sensibility. It is the point where fragments fail to stick together neatly that should interest historians of ideas, and the temptation to paper over such cracks should at all costs be resisted.

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Whether or not one wishes that Starobinski had leap-frogged *De la grammatologie* will be a matter of personal preference. But the personal approach has certain intrinsic limitations. If one is interested in the historical dimension of the *Essais*, Starobinski knows the sixteenth century well; he is aware of the extent to which historical change operates at the linguistic level (he comments, for example, on the rare use of the future tense in the *Essais*, associating it with a use of the word *histoire* which excludes connotations of process, progress, futurity); and there is a marvelous chapter — perhaps the most original in the book — on Montaigne's simultaneous suspicion of and dependence on the medical language of his day. But the priority given to individual consciousness and self-consciousness inevitably distracts attention from the character of the *Essais* as a polyphonic cross-section of contemporary texts and voices (Burke, with his no-nonsense history of ideas, journey to Italy is the paradigm for the third phase). With a hint of irony, Starobinski suggests that this tripartite division of Montaigne's life may be more appropriate than the traditional "stoic-sceptic-epicurean" schema. Every chapter has such insights: this is one of those rare critical studies that one genuinely wants to read from beginning to end.

It will already be clear that, in its method, *Montaigne en mouvement* represents a late flowering of the Genevan school of literary criticism. The theme of the book, the analysis of the recurrent configurations of a writer's imagination, the explicit view of what is fundamentally a phenomenological frame of reference, characterize not only Starobinski's earlier works but also those of his colleagues (notably Jean Rousset) and of Georges Poulet; to this he has added his own distinctive interest in psychology and medicine. For the English reader, his style will appear as distinctly "Continental", by contrast, for example, with Peter Burke's succinct and pragmatic account of Montaigne's ideas in the *Past Masters* series. Those who have begun to assume that the Genevan manner is becoming outmoded, having been overtaken first by structuralism, may even wonder whether Starobinski's *four de force* in this instance is not surreptitiously indebted to these latter developments. On the one hand, Barthes is mentioned very briefly in the final chapter as one of a series of modern thinkers dealing with problems already central to the *Essais*, while Derrida (unless I've missed a reference somewhere) is totally absent. On the other, questions such as the identity-difference crux, the undermining of the opposition between appearance and essence, and the writer's exploitation of discourses which he claims to reject, are nowadays considered as very much the province of Derrida and his followers. Where, then, does Starobinski stand?

Part of the answer is that such questions had already been raised in his book on Rousseau, to which Derrida's own reading of Rousseau is clearly indebted: Derrida has at the most enabled Starobinski to develop and consolidate his own topics and his own brand of critical reflection. Starobinski is aware of the plurality and fragmentation endemic in Montaigne's writing, of the instability of the structures of thought it sketches out, but in the end he remains attached to the uneven notion of a coherent consciousness within which all the shifts and tensions and apparent paradoxes are meaningfully contained. Unlike Derrida's style, Starobinski's is always elegant and eloquent; accidents, lapses, cracks, incoherences may figure sometimes as its themes but are never voluntarily allowed to undermine the critic's own discourse. And the third phase in the dialectic, although no doubt perceived as a trajectory rather than a fixed state, becomes the grounding in Starobinski's book for an intellectual and moral achievement, rather than (for example) a detour designed to disguise the friction between two incompatible modes of discourse.

Starobinski accepts, however, that his perspective is not purely historical: "partant d'une inquiétude moderne, posant à Montaigne, dans son texte, les questions de notre siècle, je n'ai pas cherché à éviter que ce Montaigne en mouvement ne fût aussi bien un mouvement en Montaigne"; he speaks at one point of "ce que le livre de Montaigne nous invite à penser"; and his final chapter includes some reflections on the pertinence of Montaigne's thought to a twentieth-century sensibility. For Starobinski, the *Essais* still have a message. He thus brings off the singularly difficult task of grasping the problematic and elusive character of the work while yet preserving the conviction that Montaigne says things, has ideas and values. He would not doubt feel that recent criticism, with its perfectly justifiable emphasis on the provisional nature of Montaigne's themes (or their reversion to themes of writing), has at times come dangerously close to throwing out with the baby-winter what for many readers is a very real baby. His book, in the last analysis, celebrates the Montaignian achievement of a *glissement flexible*, a moral and intellectual suppleness which carries with it the possibility (dare one say it?) of happiness.

Montaigne's language, explicitly through its themes and implicitly through its surreptitious rhetorical force, invites the reader to participate in the project it sketches out, to repeat the *essai* in a different context and language. It is therefore hardly surprising that those who write about him find it difficult to avoid repeating or paraphrasing him. As Starobinski puts it, "il n'est pas facile, pour l'interprète, de ne pas suivre", a distance variable, le langage de la parole de Montaigne . . . Montaigne provoque le consentement, l'assentiment, la contagion gestuelle, en grande partie par la façon dont il mobilise, chez son lecteur, les pouvoirs du sentir." Starobinski's solution is to concede the difficulty and to construct a "chacconne", a series of variations on a central Montaignian figure. Michel Chailou's poetic novel *Domestique chez Montaigne* uses a wholly different language and offers a quite different image of Montaigne, but he too, through one of his characters, pinpoints the problem: "Les *Essais* dès qu'on y goûte font à jamais de vous leur esclave . . . Le via sent trop bon, on croit prendre un verre, toute la bouteille y passe, C'est le diable Montaigne."

Chailou evokes the paths of a history, or legend, or tale, precariously attached to a tourist site. Montaigne's famous tower is a building closed once a year so that the "domestics" can clean it, a locus of partly inauthentic anecdotes and historical objects, the conflagration of 1885, a decayed old building in a kind of farmyard, the place where a seventeenth-century descendant of Montaigne wrote an outrageously uninteresting book, but never quite the trace of the real Montaigne.

This displacement is brought about by allowing the brief-braced surging of the legend of Montaigne to be presented primarily through the fulfilment consciousness of the locals who live and work in the château and the surrounding villages: chief among these is Alex Lambert, said to be the direct descendant of the promiscuous page Montaigne brought back from Italy. At another level, the ill-focused quest of the Montaignian Gabriel Lorgerio, who spent his refugee childhood in the area, provides an ironic commentary on the compulsion to visit the shrine: he smugly corrects

the guide on a point of fact, but when he attempts to relive Montaigne's near-fatal riding accident by rolling around in the grass, he only succeeds in making himself feel sick. The memories of these figures (they are too insubstantial to be called characters) are both personal and atavistic, so that the shadows of a many-layered past are interwoven with a fragile present. The novel spans a single day, September 23, 1980, the anniversary of Montaigne's wedding and only a few days after the anniversary of his death: in its interstices, comments of earlier happenings, from the Hundred Years War via the wars of religion to the Second World War, are briefly glimpsed and form an endless succession of half-familiar gestures.

Time, then, is one of the main themes of the novel. Through devices such as oscillations of tense, parataxis, bewildering juxtapositions and unexplained associations, Chailou recreates in his own terms a Montaignian preoccupation with *le passage* and the discontinuity it inflicts on individuals and their perception of the world. One consequence of his method is the almost total absence of narrative sequence. The "story" of the characters from Montaigne downwards, is fragmented and dispersed; in a few cases, elements of narrative belonging to a given character can be picked out and put together (this isn't a *nouveau roman*), but the novel invites the reader, by its very structure, to resist this temptation and commit himself to *le passage*.

The other main consequence, also Montaignian (although perhaps nourished by pneumonology), is the priority given to sense-experience: the novel begins with a series of graphic, uncompromisingly physical notations (Alex getting up in the morning). It is in obedience to this rule that Montaigne's disappearance from the scene is marked only by a name, some pointed rafters, the possible imprint of his behind on a sixteenth-century armchair, and some writings that Alex tries in vain to comprehend. Chailou seems indeed to suggest that the most appropriate response to the *Essais* is to move out of the realm of intellectual reflection, even out of language itself, into the realm of immediate sensation and action.

In this, his novel concurs with Starobinski's notion of a "repli sur le présent" — dans la vie du corps, dans l'histoire ou l'instinct. Both writers display in their very different ways a nostalgia for presence, which is no doubt one of the reasons why they write about, or around, Montaigne. But Chailou and Starobinski, no less than Montaigne, love the detours of language. Their celebration of *ordure au monde* is also inescapably a celebration of literature as a special variety of experience. Chailou's domestics may scorn the tourists and the scholars and be ignorant of all but the most superficial trappings of all that legend they serve; they owe the less owe their imaginative life to the imaginative powers of Montaigne's writing.

Form and Meaning: aesthetic coherence in seventeenth-century French drama, edited by William D. Howarth, Ian McFarlane and Margaret McGowan (203pp. Amersham: Avebury. £16. 0 86

Name _____
Address _____
St Paul's Bibliophiles, West End House,

Unambiguous gifts

Frank Tuohy

BRIAN FRIEL
The Diviner

155pp. Allison and Busby. £6.95.
0 86278 021 7

The Diviner is a selection from two books of short stories published twenty or more years ago. They first appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, now defunct, and the *New Yorker*, in recent years host to more avant-garde styles of fiction. There have been other changes. Brian Friel's settings are Donegal and Derry, but civil strife goes unmentioned. He himself has become one of Ireland's leading dramatists, author of fifteen plays from *Philadelphia, here I come* to the recent success *Translations*.

It is difficult therefore to read *The Diviner* without hindsight, and to avoid noticing in the structure of each story, the playwright's gifts in embryo. Many Irish writers like to give an impression of casualness - "Wait now till I tell you" - and feign a style that parodies the speaking voice. Friel does this at times, but the most conspicuous quality of his writing is its deliberation. He marshals his characters in contrasting groups; his dialogue is less realistic than expressive, even expressionistic. In "The Illusionists", for example, the mutual boasting of the boy narrator's father and the visiting mountebank is carried on antiphrastically for a whole page. In a strongly theatrical manner. Another story, "The Cold in the Sea", has a young fisherman with, we are told, a weakness for proverbs. Sure enough, whenever he opens his mouth it is to say "a stitch in time saves nine" or "it's an ill wind . . . etc. This is slightly tiresome in the reading, though it

might work as a running gag on stage. Brian Friel is often very funny, and his irony is strong and unambiguous.

Two stories, "The Widowhood System" and "Ginger Hero", one about racing pigeons, the other about cock-fighting, show Friel's deliberate economy at its best. In both, competition over the birds provides the narrative, and at the same time the birds take on a clear symbolic reference to the sexual life of the principal human characters - all this, though, without any of the nudging one finds in post-Lorentzian fiction.

"Ginger Hero", in addition, gets a good deal of fun out of the tragicomic results of fertility and sterility in Catholic Ireland.

This theme reappears in "Foundry House". Here Joe Brennan, with his wife and nine children, moves into the lodge of the great house where he played as a child. The two old Hogans, "one of the best Catholic families in the North of Ireland" have dwindled into Chekhovian innuendo. The son, Joe's contemporary, has become a Jesuit, and Joe has to provide a tape-recorder on which to play the gruesomely cheerful tape sent by the daughter, a nun, from her convent in West Africa.

In a long introduction, Seamus Deane tells us that "Foundry House" is fact developed into the play. *Aristocrats*. He makes some interesting points - "Brian Friel's people live in a state of permanent and alert disappointment" - but many of them, like this one, turn out to have a wider application than perhaps was intended. Nothing he writes adds to the pleasures provided by these highly accomplished stories. It is not very long since native Irish writers almost inevitably fell foul of Church and State in publishing their work. A reprint like this originating in Dublin, in a series called *Classic Irish Fiction*, deserves more of a celebration, a shout of joy.

In and out of Africa

Christopher Hope

SAMUEL CHARTERS

Mr. Jabl and Mr. Smythe
247pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£6.95.
0 7100 9408 6

SASHA MOORSOM

In the Shadow of the Paradise Tree
247pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£6.95.
0 7100 9408 6

Africa is another country and people really live there, despite travellers' tales. It is pleasant to find writers who will face this interesting and alarming fact. Samuel Charters has written a sober, restrained account of the return to West Africa of a retired colonial administrator, Tony Smythe, who finds that the territory he once governed and from which he was ejected as an agent of imperialism has not made the leap forward confidently predicted at the time of independence. His disenchantment is foreseen by his host and old friend, Mr. Jabl, who knows he can do little to ease the former District Officer's bitter disappointment at finding the village sunk in the same poverty from which they had struggled to deliver it, back in the days when Mr. Smythe was a young, enthusiastic commissioner and Mr. Jabl his loyal supporter.

Smythe is now an ailing, elderly widower, lost without his wife who, he at last begins to realise, patiently endured the barren years of his lonely posting. He turns his back on his retirement cottage in England and returns to Africa unable to explain the attraction the desolate village still exercises. "A gaggle of huts pitched together in the back of nowhere", Mr. Jabl is the first to admit how painful it must be and to mourn with his white friend the waste of his best years spent

in the struggle to bring such unpromising material up to scratch. Jabl quivers with understanding, though tact and good taste prevent him from pointing to the lack of anything like the same understanding in his old friend.

Samuel Charters's grasp of African ironies is the central achievement of the novel. We become increasingly and painfully aware how Mr. Smythe's angry perceptions of endemic inefficiency point to accurate but insufficient truths. The suffering of Tony Smythe and the unspoken anguish of Mr. Jabl are beautifully juxtaposed. In a memorable scene Mr. Smythe faces the new, black, thoroughly corrupt Commissioner and declares that the old Colonial Service was full of good men who knew their duty, which was "to bring civilisation to a part of the world where there had never been any sign of it before". It is when he tests such breath-takingly old-fashioned utterances against the complex realities of modern Africa that Charters is most convincing. As the tragedy unfolds, it seems all the more impressive for its tone of quiet restraint. Nothing is forced. Mr. Smythe, decked out once again in his yellow colonial whites and sun-helmet, sets off on his District Commissioner's rounds, determined to write his report, to investigate the official corruption he discovers around him, to note the failing equipment and the blocked drains, watched by the incredulous, despairing Mr. Jabl who can do nothing to prevent his friend from laying down what remains of his life for his country.

The encounter with Africa described in *Sasha Moorsom's* campy novel *In the Shadow of the Paradise Tree* is altogether more modish. In the bad old days Europeans set out for Africa in search of slaves, souls, gold or glory. Jessica Miles, the liberated, feminist lecturer in media studies, goes there in search of herself. It might be a more

worthy motive, but it is nothing like as interesting. The grand-daughter of a missionary family, she spends a good deal of her time looking back guiltily over her shoulder to England, where the missionaries came from, and the rest of it experiencing the sexual and political spills of life among expatriate academics threatened by bugs, beggars and the violent troops of General Ajoka, corrupt dictator of the state of Zunia. Jessica takes up with a sensitive American microbiologist, adopts an orphan monkey and falls in love with a mysterious nomad called Tikin who smells of musk and spices. She finds her feminism severely tested by Moslem polygamy and female circumcision, and the brutal cynicism of Zunian politics makes the reader wonder whether the England of the missionaries is as bad as she maintains. In every instance a fiery speech from some genuinely radical source about the equivalent awfulness of European customs puts the record straight.

The story of a liberated woman in an illiberal land, *In the Shadow of the Paradise Tree* has its moments. *Sasha Moorsom* can be vividly and grimly funny. The discovery that menstrual blood is an effective charm against rape is nicely handled, and the praise-poems for corrupt ministers which adorn the local paper are perfectly caught; but her campus resembles nothing so much as an exotic holiday camp, a view of Africa from the Club Med terrace verandah. The pace is hectic. Jessica plays the guitar, quotes from the Song of Solomon, does not teach very much at all and when her colleague Hassan is arrested for producing a play about government corruption, she is placed under house-arrest; everyone eventually deported and they all fly home to the BBC to campaign for Hassan's release. This tale of a thoroughly modern expulsion from Eden is often amusing, sometimes perhaps not in ways its author intended.

Such details would be trivial save that Charters's loyalty to his brother Cecil involved him for decades with the world politicians. So one thing we are apt to want in 1983 is help in judging his judgments of political men now swallowed up by time. For this, cartoon phrasing is useless.

Our sense of his literary encounters too would be enabled by characterizations more careful than *The Outline of Sany's* always provides. Who was "the poet Yeats", for a

from the jungle; on their return the dog gets rabies shots, but father has a leg amputated and dies. After a fire and more farcical chaos, the *deus ex machina* descends.

It is a helicopter bearing Jonathan's rich granny, his millionaire publisher stepfather and Senator Hollenberg of the Foreign Relations Committee. At Ben's funeral, Hak delivers the Eulogy: "To a down-and-out town, robbed of its natural beauty and dignity, he brought the spirit of America." Of the son (and Jonathan Bradshaw simply didn't think!

The Epilogue tidies up: Puerto Gusano is to host an annual Meeting of Life. Conferees: The State Department, a hospital gives free treatment, "The oil company cleans up and employs everyone. The crippled orphans are adopted by rich homes in New Jersey. Jonathan writes *War and Pizza*, appears on the *Dick Cavett Show*, marries a cheerleader and retires to Wy Worry Lane, Vermont. They all live happily ever after.

Criminal proceedings

S. F. X. DEAN

Such Pretty Toys
223pp. Collins. £6.95.
0 00231799 0

College professor of English Neil Kelly is about to take off for a sabbatical in England to get over the murder of his intended - see S. F. X. Dean's previous novel, *By Frequent Anguish* - when he learns from the CIA that two of his best friends have been blown up by a bomb in a Jack-in-the-box. He flies down to New Mexico and gets all tied up with the FBI, CIA, terrorists, and mixed-up bumpy plot and an uneasy read, but there are good bits here and there. If Kelly can make it to Devon, perhaps his author can get back to the simplicity and ease of the previous book.

MICHAEL INNES

Appleby and Honeybath
155pp. Gollancz. £6.95.
0 575 03248 0

What is the point, Michael Innes might have thought, of artificially keeping two characters apart, when in real life they would have been more likely to meet each other than not? So, in his latest book, the invigilator artist Honeybath and the retired policeman Appleby are forced to look into the mystery of the corpse that has vanished from the library of Grinnon Hall. Light, witty, entertaining with - as is usual - a touch of the macabre, this is a fine collection of eccentricities ranging from the philistine science of Grinnon Hall to the scholarly butler.

T. J. Blythe

An everlasting man

Hugh Kenner

ALZINA STONE DALE

The Outline of Sany's: A Biography of G. K. Chesterton
356pp. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans. \$18.95.
0 8028 3550 3

Chesterton's newest biographer was five years old when he died; her knowledge of the time as well as of the man has therefore been the product of research from beginning to end. Having had to look up absolutely everything, she achieves results that are sometimes almost memorable: graces rarely beyond the reach of art. My favourite is what she has ascertained of Stephen Spender: "Young Spender was a lemming, always in the swim of intellectual fashion." That's an intellectual lemming to be sure, and no nonsense about marching over cliffs. (Real lemmings, by the way, aren't much at swimming. They get eaten by fish.)

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, 1874-1936: who were the characters that peopled his world? David Lloyd George for instance, who was he? Research has not failed: "A self-serving politician", in fact "a crook". Who was John Buchan, later Lord Tweedsmuir, who in 1915 sent Chesterton a note of praise for "Lepanto"? That's an easy one: "spy-story author and Tory politician". What a useful word is "politician".

Such details would be trivial save that Chesterton's loyalty to his brother Cecil involved him for decades with the world politicians. So one thing we are apt to want in 1983 is help in judging his judgments of political men now swallowed up by time. For this, cartoon phrasing is useless.

Our sense of his literary encounters too would be enabled by characterizations more careful than *The Outline of Sany's* always provides. Who was "the poet Yeats", for a

time Mrs. Chesterton's neighbour in Bedford Park? Why, someone who "went about in a floppy velvet bow tie, pretending to believe in fairies". There we may feel sure the phrase rings wrong. That the Irish *sidhe* ("shee", as in banshee) were not in the least like Tinker Bell is one thing that has eluded Alzina Stone Dale's researches. Research at best is a net, more gap than cordage.

More complex wonders abound. Research - here a rapid paging of Samuel Hynes's *The Auden Generation* - yields the following picture of the 1920s:

"The younger 'intellectuals' who had not actually fought were disenchanted with the peace, partly because they had veterans for teachers and partly because of 'war literature' like the poems of Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, and Robert Graves. As the decade went on, their feelings were expressed by books like Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point*, Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, and Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* became their Bible.

Such sentences instil us in that pericy-journal world where "generation" waits for writers to "express" its "feelings". What a gamut of expressions too! The six books listed have in common just two things: their decade of origin, their un-Chestertonian texture. And *The Waste Land* a Bible? As late as 1931 F. R. Leavis felt required to make the case for its being as much as a poem.

Eliot's "world-picture", we next learn, was "another form of the decadence and despair [Chesterton] had fought before in the fin de siècle mentality at the Slade". (Why in that case Eliot emerged from the Slade is not explained.) *The Waste Land* conveyed the hopelessness, of an intellectual community with no sense of comradeship. . . . Because this mood prevailed, the old politicians

were being allowed to run things as they liked while the young licked their private wounds, the kind of situation that Chesterton always protested against." That he later dedicated a book to Eliot (*The Well and the Shallows*, 1935) is something Alzina Stone Dale didn't find it convenient to tell us.

Her way is strewn, alas, with inconveniences, not least the many previous books about Chesterton. About these on the whole she's not tolerant; there are times when she seems driven by no motive save rescuing her man from all manner of admirers, the better to get him admired correctly. As for murmurs of deprecation, however qualified, they move her to transient petulance: "Still another collection of essays . . . came out in October 1928. Some claim this writing is less wise and less clever, showing Chesterton's age." "Some claim . . . is an impatient loss of the head: tiresome people being tiresome as usual. And who are these curmudgeons? No hint. But literary judgments, so we gather here and there, are arbitrary anyhow. If you dislike them, dismiss them and their makers. It may even suffice to remark (as she does in this instance) that several of the essays in question have since been anthologized, and leave the capious to make what they can of that.

With the chief previous biography, Maisie Ward's fat book of 1944, silence may seem to her the most tactful dealing. Mrs. Ward having apt only endorsed misleading chronologies from casual sources, but also figured among those who made the man "only a plaster saint for Roman Catholics to love".

Alzina Stone Dale is inclined to be especially impatient with Roman Catholics, excluding only Chesterton himself. For one thing, they are apt to claim that Chesterton had been one of them since, oh, 1900, his 1922 "conversion" being no more than a book-keeper's correction. Also when he converted they "made use of him", a vulgarly she says he "ambly up with". So what it actually was that he

did in 1922 is something she is obliged to clarify, in process, presumably encoded in the following sentences:

To discourage his possible backsliding in the cause he had accepted for his late brother, Cecil, and to increase his own self-discipline as a soldier, he deliberately chose to act out his conviction about the state of the world. He has made the same kind of gesture as a young man in the early 1900's, but now he saw the necessity of "taking the cross" in such a way that he was "standing up to be counted", assuming the public posture which identified him as part of a particular community, just as he had suggested Jews be distinguished by distinctive clothes.

As the key word for Spender was "lemming", so here the key word is "gesture", and to no better purpose. And sure enough, in its entourage we observe "posture". Gesture, posture: Lord help us all. That something more profound than the uses of visibility could have drawn a very shy and private man, for whom the fat fellow in the cape was camouflage merely, to an act he'd shunned for two decades; that he may have heard an insistent voice calling his name; that in short he *mean* what he undertook that day sixty-one years ago, and moved toward where he heard his Maker speaking - that seems inconceivable. Heavens, no. Gesture, posture: something for the English to take in, however Roman Catholics might misuse it. Alzina Stone Dale has written, with some trouble, a silly, well-meaning book about a deeply enigmatic man.

Who was he? The question remains. He was emphatically not a booby optimist. He was as fierce a rationalist as Britain has nurtured since Hume. Garry Wills, in the best book yet written about him (*Chesterton: Man and Mask*, 1961) noted his swiftness in argument, his headlong logic, his "insomnia of intelligence". "Entirely lacking the losting grasp of character, the parochial and unthinking optimism of Dickens", Chesterton argued constantly with

himself, "a participant in the eternal battle and balance of ideas". That is why, in his fictions, people turn into emblems, emblems into people: why in the Father Brown stories, motives so readily incarnate themselves as clues.

By no accident, rather by co-natality, George Bernard Shaw, a demented rationalist, found Gilbert Chesterton - fascinating. Maisie Ward didn't understand him - Shaw bothered her - and one thing to the present biographer's credit is a rightly placed emphasis on the long association with Shaw. She's right, too, in playing down Belloc, with whom Chesterton has less in common than legend prescribes. It was Chesterton's mind, not Belloc's, that enjoyed the French feel for abstractions; there may be more than anyone has discerned in the fact that his mother's family name was Grosjean. (They had come from Switzerland.)

At home in the flux of ideas, he was menaced, and knew he was, by solipsism: by the insidious temptation to accord reality to nothing save the self and its streaming ideas. That way, he was right to suspect, lay madness. There is a sense in which he hardly knew nne human being from another, save when the person was sufficiently possessed by an idea to embody it: to be propelled by it to be, walking, So Shaw and H. G. Wells and F. E. Smith were vividly distinct. But the greengrocer? The postman? They were apt to lapse into simple instances of "the people". It's no wonder he found his saviour in a religion played on incarnation, on the sanctifying of matter, which individuals.

And interest in him doesn't die, though he goes out of fashion. Interest in reality is unlikely. "The final verdict on Gilbert Keith Chesterton is not yet in", Alzina Stone Dale tells us, as though there were going to be one (what's the "final verdict" on Chaucer?). No final biography is foreseeable either. The excuse for this one is that it has rekindled some attention to an everlasting man: a man we'd now benefit from reading on Barthes and Derrida, solipsists.

Hammering it home

Lewis Jones

JANUSZ GLOWACKI

Give Us This Day
Translated by Konrad Brodzinski
121pp. Andre Deutsch. £6.95.
0 233 97512 7

Give Us This Day is an account of the events at the Gdansk shipyard in 1980. Its narrator is an anonymous proletarian not unlike the stock hero of official literature, being a good-hearted and industrious patriot of rather limited understanding. Janusz Glowacki (who has, as the dust-jacket puts it, been "locked out of Poland by the declaration of martial law") wields his blunt instrument of a hero with the energy of a stakhanovite, and the novel rounds with hammering ironia: these are sometimes extremely laboured, but one feels this to be a legitimate expression of anger and frustration at the brutal contradictions of the subject-matter, rather than artistic ineptitude.

"Can't complain." The first sentence sums up both the political dimension (complaint is impossible because there is nothing to complain of) and the attitude of the narrator. He counts himself most fortunate to subsist with his large family in a superannuated circus caravan (decoration on this, a pig wearing a hat, a tiger baring its fangs), the first of a series of allogating facilities, and to work sometimes on continuous shifts of more than twenty hours, as a hull-welder. Porchouse reactionary elements among his work-mates who subscribe to such bourgeois-liberal slogans as "justice, equality, bread and meat" feel pity and contempt.

His story begins about six months before the strike, when he is summoned to the office of his boss, "the High Comrade" himself, and asked for information about trouble-makers. He dutifully describes the activities of characters such as Four-

Eyes (a feminist), Swartby (a Jew who has spent his life trying to avoid politics, with conspicuous lack of success) and Misiak the Bear (an *agent provocateur*). The uncessa he feels at his next task, the sabotage of a workers' meeting, begins to resemble guilt when he is called on to testify at the trial of Four-Eyes ("I'd simply read out a statement based on my own personal observations, which statement he gave me to study straight away") and when the strike erupts he decides to make amends by supporting it. The workers accept him, for reasons of their own, and the High Comrade manages to maintain his connection with him, so he is ideally placed to witness the ensuing struggle between the proletariat and its dictators.

The state is depicted as corrupt and stupid, but assured of victory by its patience and its ruthless mendacity. The workers, under the leadership of "Walrus", have only anger to sustain them, and this is dissipated by uncertainty and by insignificant considerations. The Church, of course, helps to reduce the balance; but though its influence is considerable (the strikers, for example, are allowed to pass through police road-blocks on production of a medal of the Pope) it cannot be decisive. The nature of the struggle is summed up in one of the most memorable scenes of the novel, the disruption of an open-air mass at the shipyard by helicopters which shower the congregation with propaganda (with the memory of 1970 in mind, they are expecting bullets).

Give Us This Day is an effective documentary, a humorous, personal and matter-of-fact supplement to the frequently bombastic coverage given by the media (predictably, there are jokes about the gullibility of the Western news teams). The confusion, the mercenary rumours, the rapid switches between elation and despair are convincingly portrayed, and the pathos is all the more powerful for being confined to the novel's last sentence: "It looks like I'll be all right after all."

Hak work

Nicholas Rankin

JOHN HOPKINS

The Flight of the Pelican
250pp. Chatto and Windus/Hogarth Press. £8.50.
0 7011 2660 4

A principal character in this fairy-story of South America is the Chief of Police Umberto Hak, described on the jacket as "a fiery and magnificently demented". He has a film that he likes to project backwards. In it, the Santa Petrolina refinery is dismantled, the pollution disappears, fishermen give back their fish to the sea, and the pelicans reappear, flying first, as the Puerto Gusano is made pristine again. It is a pleasant conceit, symbolizing Hak's desire that "we can make the future be like the past, which is exactly, as God intended it", but also pointing to the conservative ideology of John Hopkins's WASP comedy novel, *The Flight of the Pelican* is a whimsical attempt to turn the historical clock back to a time when Americans felt loved by the pines of their hemisphere.

The hero is Jonathan Bradshaw, a rich upper class Yankee (educated, like the author, at Hotchkiss and Princeton). "Some people think that I know a lot like Jack Kennedy", he says, identifying an admired father-figure. On learning that his own father, who disappeared in 1955, may still be alive, he leaves the family lunch at Martha's Vineyard for the Caribbean in search of him; with a gun in his suitcase and a mouth full of gas.

The trail leads to Puerto Gusano, an imaginary town that would place in the "Orinoco delta of eastern Venezuela. (There is an authentic local detail; but it is thrown away in the banal sentimentality and relentless jokiness of American television-land, occasionally leavened by East Coast snobbery. He meets the town's "characters", including a priest whose routine flutters with lottery tickets

and the improbable Chief of Police, all of whom cherish his father's memory. The lovable fascist Hak has the family silver and photographs, and remembers Ben Bradshaw, Jonathan's father, selling his boat *Pelican* into their town like a Greek god. "He was the best-looking man that I'd ever seen. Tall, clean cut, blond - superstar Ben Bradshaw, tan and lean, hands on hips."

Jonathan learns that this Apollo is now upriver, with the police-chief's wife, and suffering from yaws. He also learns that Hak and Bradshaw smuggled the arms for the coup that ousted The Peaceful Banana Company and brought in the Santa Petrolina refinery and its pollution. Fighting off bats, mosquitoes and savage dogs, the torpidson finds his father in the heart of darkness. Mistak Kurtz he is not. "Dad, you look so urbane, distinguished and sophisticated," Bradshaw senior is living with a black woman who keeps a parrot in her hair. The flamboyance on his father's legs make Jonathan exclaim "Is this a manifestation of what's wrong with your soul?" The dogs then drive them

Criminal proceedings

S. F. X. DEAN

Such Pretty Toys
223pp. Collins. £6.95.
0 00231799 0

College professor of English Neil Kelly is about to take off for a sabbatical in England to get over the murder of his intended - see S. F. X. Dean's previous novel, *By Frequent Anguish* - when he learns from the CIA that two of his best friends have been blown up by a bomb in a Jack-in-the-box. He flies down to New Mexico and gets all tied up with the FBI, CIA, terrorists, and mixed-up bumpy plot and an uneasy read, but there are good bits here and there. If Kelly can make it to Devon, perhaps his author can get back to the simplicity and ease of the previous book.

MICHAEL INNES

Appleby and Honeybath
155pp. Gollancz. £6.95.
0 575 03248 0

What is the point, Michael Innes might have thought, of artificially keeping two characters apart, when in real life they would have been more likely to meet each other than not? So, in his latest book, the invigilator artist Honeybath and the retired policeman Appleby are forced to look into the mystery of the corpse that has vanished from the library of Grinnon Hall. Light, witty, entertaining with - as is usual - a touch of the macabre, this is a fine collection of eccentricities ranging from the philistine science of Grinnon Hall to the scholarly butler.

T. J. Blythe

New York sales of books and manuscripts

Sarah Bradford

On May 20, Christie's, New York, sold further instalments of the John A. Saks collection of English Private Press books, the finest of its kind to have appeared for sale in recent years. The Ashendene volumes from the collection were sold last November (see TLS, January 14, 1983); this time it was the turn of the Kalmiscot Press. The Kalmiscot is the most prized of the volumes from the Press printed on vellum, forty-nine lots offered as a collection and bought by Maggs for \$60,000.

At the time of the death of William Morris, the founder of the Press, in 1896, there were only three complete sets in existence, one of which, Morris's own, was subsequently broken up when his executor, Sydney Cockerell, sold many of the volumes to Henry Gurnham in August 1897. Gurnham's Kalmiscot collector, Marsden J. Perry and then in turn by John A. Saks at the sale of the Marsden Perry library in 1936. Hence his collection included twenty-one books which had belonged to Morris himself.

The use of vellum, a beautiful but deplorable medium for a printer, was characteristic of Morris, with his drive for aesthetic perfection and his passion for medieval manuscripts, and early editions of his works on vellum lo an attempt to reproduce the splendour of the manuscripts which his inventio was to supplant. Morris's first special edition, *The Glittering Plain*, 1891, was printed on fine Roman vellum (beats printed from the skins of moose-hoof calves) and had been used for writng his manuscripts. Selfishly, in Morris's new vellum manuscript to allow him to be able to fall back on a less expensive "skins" specially

prepared for him by J. Bland of Brentford.

The vellum editions sold on May 20 included, naturally, the Gutenberg Bible of Private Press Books - the Kalmiscot - Chaucer, 1896, and, interestingly, a small relic of a book which Morris intended to rival the Chaucer, an edition of Lord Berners's translation of Prologues's *Chronicles*. "Almost his favourite book" according to Cockerell. The project never progressed beyond two trial pages set up in Chaucer type in 1893 and posthumously printed in September 1897 to preserve the designs made for that work by William Morris. The collection also included a presentation copy of *The Story of the Glittering Plain* from Morris to his friend the bookseller Frederick S. Ellis, who edited the Chaucer and many of the Kalmiscot texts; and the last two of Morris's *Love is Enough* and his *Note on his Aims in Founding the Kalmiscot Press*, issued simultaneously in March 1898, eighteen months after his death.

Apart from the vellum collection there were some interesting items among the remaining Saks books in the sale, including a pre-Kalmiscot experiment in typography by Morris, *The Story of Ginnung the Worm-Tongue and Raven the Skald*, one of four copies in Gothic type on vellum printed for Morris at the Chiswick Press and completed in November 1890 just over a month before the setting up of the Kalmiscot Press in January 1891 (\$5,280). The first two pages ever printed by the Press, trial settings from *The Glittering Plain*, made \$2,200, while Morris's proofs with his autograph corrections and revisions of his *Poems by the Way*, the second Kalmiscot book, printed and fetched \$5,500. One large folio leaf of Golden type of text from Act 1 of *Macbeth* represented one of only two survivors of another cherished Morris project, a three-volume folio edition of Shakespeare's plays (\$3,080); while,

less grandiose in conception but in its way also close to Morris's ideals, was an Atlas folio sheet "Portrait of Sir Isaac Lowthian Bell. Presented to the Workmen of Bell Brothers Limited in Commemoration of the Fiftieth Year of the Existence of the Firm", 1894, (\$1,430), upon which, on either side of a medallion portrait of the bearded ironmaster two workmen repose on their hammers amid incongruous scrolls of bluebells and verses proclaiming the virtues of honest labour. On a rare theme a set of twenty-nine Scholar-ship Certificates for the Technical Education Board of the London County Council, 1894-1898, sold for \$3,250. A complete set of the *Chaucer* woodcuts by W. H. Hooper from designs by Burne-Jones, proof impressions, made \$10,450 and a series of forty-six wood-engravings designed for *Macbeth* and *Pyrrhus* were sold for \$9,900. A copy of Shakespeare's *Poems* in a characteristically pretty Dove's binding in white pigskin, gilt, with Tudor roses and flower stems made \$6,050; while more interesting from the point of view of Morris's source of inspiration in the fifteenth century was an unusual binding from the Dove's bindery, modelled on the South German bindings of the period - brown pigskin-backed oak boards with clasps and leather straps (\$4,400).

Morris, a keen collector himself, would have appreciated two fine illuminated manuscripts from the Saks collection. A beautiful *Psalter* and a *New Offices from a Brevarium*, for a executed in Paris in 1285-97, for a Queen of France, either Marie de Brabant, widow of Philippe III or Jeanne IV, was bought by H. P. Kraus for \$66,000. Kraus also acquired a lavishly illuminated *Histoire Ancienne* in two volumes for \$262,000. Executed in Paris in about 1380 the sixteenth-century miniature scenes of war, murder and siege from the Old Testament and the ages of Alexander, Hannibal and Julius Caesar, reflecting

the violent nature of the troubled fourteenth century.

Sotbey's New York sale on May 25 also contained documents, evoking an age of violence - Tsarist and revolutionary Russia. The collection of Russian letters and historical documents, the property of Mrs Philip D. Saag, included some remarkable items. Strangest of all, if it is indeed, as the catalogue suggests, dated 1916 and addressed to the Tsar and the Tsarina of Russia ("Dear Ones") is an autograph letter by Rasputin (\$4,000 to Rendell). To it Rasputin apparently predicts not only his own murder, which took place in December 1916, but the Revolution the following year and the execution of the Imperial family in July 1918.

A grim sign and great sorrow will come. The face of the Intercessor (Mother of God) has become shrouded and there is a restless spirit in the silence of the night. . . . As it is said, watch for you do not know the day nor the hour and so it is time for our world. Blood will be spilt from terror, so much blood and wailing. . . . My hour is near, great sorrow. You will be sorry to leave your nest and the little birds do not need to see much further. . . . I worry about you and grieve for our dear ones. Their sorrowful journeys are known unto God. There will be martyrs for the faith. . . . Great is the evil that the earth shall shake and hunger and disease and signs will be in all the world. . . .

The collection included a very rare Soviet document signed by both Leonid and Trotsky. Dated from the Kremlin, July 11, 1918, it was, interestingly, still written in the